

The Oak Tree Federation
Anti-Bullying Policy
March 2025



Introduction

‘Bullying is a wilful conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone’ (Tattum and Herbert 1990)

Definition of bullying

Bullying is mean behaviour that happens over and over again.

Bullying is done on purpose.

A person who bullies wants to hurt the other person.

The person who bullies has more power.

He or she might be older, bigger, more popular, or stronger than the person who gets bullied.

Sometimes a group of children will get together to bully another child.

- Bullying can take many forms:
- **Physical bullying** (hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, damaging or taking property)
- **Verbal bullying** (name calling, put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, name calling, excessive criticism or sarcasm)
- **Indirect bullying** (rumours or stories, exclusion from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass, withholding friendship or affection)
- **Cyber bullying** (inappropriate phone calls including prank calls, inappropriate text messaging including through websites, social networking sites, instant messaging, chat rooms or e-mails, sending in appropriate or offensive images by phone, email or via the internet). Please see both the Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy which are available on both our school's websites or can be accessed as hard copies from the school offices.
- **Racist bullying** Racism and racist bullying can include: being called racist names or being sent insulting messages or threats, having your belongings damaged or having to see racist graffiti, personal attacks, including violence or assault, being left out, treated differently or excluded, people making assumptions about you because of your colour, race, religion or culture being made to feel like you have to change how you look, racist jokes, including jokes about your colour, nationality, race, religion or culture.
- Homophobic, transphobic, bi-phobic or gender variant bullying

- Bullying of children who may be vulnerable or experiencing bullying behaviours (e.g. children with SEND, SLCN, EAL)

Aims and objectives

- 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.
- We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.
- We aim, as a school, to nurture an environment that respects the nine protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- 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.

The role of governors

- The governing body supports the Executive Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.
- The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the Executive Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.
- The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Executive Headteacher and asks him/her to investigate the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

The role of the Executive Headteacher and Head of Schools

- It is the responsibility of the Executive 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 deal with incidents of bullying. The Head of Schools reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.
- The Executive Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Executive Headteacher or Head of Schools draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, they may decide to use assembly or circle time as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being sanctioned
- The Executive Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

- The Executive Headteacher and Head of Schools 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.
- The Executive Headteacher and Head of Schools ensures that appropriate action is taken, including liaising with other staff and parents, and discussing behaviour with the pupils themselves. Any reports of bullying will be investigated and after investigation they will be recorded as founded or unfounded, depending on the outcome of the investigation.

The role of the teacher

- Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. Records of all concerning incidents that happen in their class or that they are aware of in the school are recorded on My Concern to give a holistic overview and chronology of incidents relating to a child or group of children.
- If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied or concerns are raised about ongoing conflicts between individuals, then, after consultation with the Executive Headteacher, the teacher informs the children's' parents. (both the person alleged to be bullying and the person being bullied)
- All incidents of bullying that occur outside lesson time are recorded on My Concern. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying, they should record the event using My Concern
- If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately and report this on My Concern. This may involve counselling and support for the person being bullied and a sanction or reflection discussion for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the Executive Headteacher and the special needs co-ordinator. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Executive Headteacher or Head of Schools may contact external support agencies such as children's social care or ESBAS.
- Teachers regularly use Life Skills lessons, "Circle Time", assemblies and other teaching opportunities to work on social skills, self-esteem, citizenship and emotional intelligence, in a way that is designed to give those being bullied more confidence in seeking help and resolutions, and those who are bullying a greater awareness of their actions.
- Annually we take part in 'Anti Bullying week' and regularly go through what bullying is and the various forms it comes in e.g Cyber bullying. Assemblies over the year reinforce the message that bullying is unacceptable.
- Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.
- Teachers use a whole school Thrive and Therapeutic Thinking approach and Thrive intervention sessions, either 1:1 or in small groups to address where any bullying may come from and to help children understand its effect on others

The role of parents

- Parent/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.
- Parent/carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.
- Parent/carers have a responsibility to model respectful behaviour to each other.
- No incidents of adult/carer bullying will be tolerated and it must be reported to the Executive headteacher as soon as possible.
- The role of the children
- If children see anyone being bullied they will tell an adult – don't keep it inside
- If children see any bullying they will try to help the child who's been bullied by being kind to them – say something positive about what they have done well in class, or take them to an adult
- Act confidently – this can discourage bullies
- If you are being bullied walk away and do not respond – don't fight, argue or text etc.
- If you are a bully and see someone else being bullied, then try to think about how that would feel and stop being a bully
- All children can help other children to understand what bullying is – especially the School Council

Monitoring and review

- This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Executive Headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request.
- This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's behaviour data, and by discussion with the Executive Headteacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

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