

Grendon CE Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

1 Introduction

Bullying is action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally. Bullying could be physical, emotional, cyber, homophobic or racial. Its distinction from other types of incident is that it is targeted and persistent over time, with single incidents of unacceptable behaviour addressed through the school's Behaviour & Discipline Policy.

2 Aims and objectives

Bullying is wrong and has the potential to cause great harm to 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 and reach their potential. 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.

3 What is bullying?

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- Repeated often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks – including those about race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and special educational needs
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours
- Cyber bullying – this is the misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation

Information taken from:

Kidscape: <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-young-people/dealing-with-bullying/>

Stonewall: https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/getting_started_toolkit_-_primary.pdf

4 Church of England: Valuing All God's Children

Within the scope of commonly accepted bullying definitions, the school has included guidance from the Church of England's Valuing All God's Children which highlights the prevalence of LGBT bullying in schools.

Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying can be defined as behaviour or language which makes a person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, whether actual or perceived, or because of their association with people who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (eg; children of same-sex couples).

As with any incident of bullying, LGBT will be dealt with promptly and firmly by the school.

5 Church of England: Vision For Education

To further support its stance on bullying, our School reflects the Church of England's Vision For Education and embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of pupils. The school embraces excellence but sets them in a wider framework that includes the four basic elements of:

Educating for Wisdom

Our school fosters confidence and discipline in seeking wisdom, knowledge, truth, understanding and the skills needed to shape life well. Academic achievement, emotional intelligence and creativity across the whole range of school subjects is carefully nurtured, as is the need to understand and practise the characteristics required to be a good person.

Educating for Hope

How children learn to approach the future is crucial. Our school opens up horizons of hope and aspiration, and guides pupils into ways of fulfilling them. Pupils are supported to become resilient, honest, generous, compassionate, determined and forgiving in their life journey.

Educating for Community

Pupils are inextricably involved in the lives of others and are expected to fulfil their responsibility towards them and to contribute to their communities, both locally and further afield. Our school focuses on the development of relationships and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.

Educating for Dignity

The basic principle of dignity is prioritised to the extent that every member of the school community is treated with respect, differences are celebrated and all are recognised as being equal in the eyes of God.

6 The role of governors

The governing body supports the Head Teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy makes it very clear that the governing body does not tolerate any form of bullying and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body's strategic role in matters of bullying is to be familiar with and regularly review the effectiveness of the school policy. The governors require the Head Teacher 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.

Anonymised, statistical information will be provided to governors via the HT Report showing the number of bullying investigations underway in school and their broad outcome if known.

In the interests of confidentiality towards individuals involved and to safeguard the integrity of an investigation or allegation, governors must not engage in any way with an active or historic bullying investigation or seek additional details of a specific case, beyond sign-posting parents to the Head Teacher if they become aware of concerns being expressed in the public domain.

7 The role of the Head Teacher

All allegations of bullying will be thoroughly investigated by the Head Teacher with support, as appropriate, from relevant members of staff and, in some cases, external professionals.

Details of an allegation will be shared by the Head Teacher with all relevant parties which will usually be the parents of both the victim and perpetrator. Where clarification is required as to whether the allegation fulfils the criteria of bullying, the Head Teacher will liaise with the family of the alleged victim to better understand their concerns and reach an understanding. This may include gathering further, specific information about the allegation in order for an investigation to proceed.

Whether it be through a pupil or parent report or through the school's own observations, all allegations of bullying will be investigated. All such allegations will be acknowledged with the parents of the alleged victim by the Head Teacher within one working day of the initial report.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher 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 Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. This features regularly as an assembly theme as well as part of the wider curriculum.

The Head Teacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying. This takes place at Staff meetings and Training days.

8 The role of the teaching and support staff

All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and are aware of the different types of bullying listed earlier in this policy. They are also aware of their duty to report any concerns about bullying.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, the school aims to prevent incidents of bullying.

Teaching staff keep and monitor their own class behaviour records, including any patterns of behaviour. If teachers become aware of a situation where they believe bullying is taking place, they will gather information and escalate this to the Head Teacher.

Support staff must escalate concerns to the class teacher or Head Teacher. As an investigation proceeds and then concludes, members of staff should respect the integrity and confidentiality of the process by not sharing details of the investigation in the public domain

9 The role of parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, have a duty to contact their child's class teacher or Head Teacher immediately that they are aware of concerns. There are numerous ways in which concerns can be shared by parents including face-to-face, email, phone or paper-based communication and it is pertinent that concerns are shared without delay.

As an investigation proceeds and then concludes, parents should respect the integrity and confidentiality of the process by not sharing details of the investigation in the public domain.

Parents 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.

10 The role of pupils

Allegations of bullying made by a pupil in school will always be escalated to the Head Teacher.

Supported by the school's Christian ethos and the Global Curriculum, children learn how to recognise and report different types of bullying. All pupils report that they know how to keep themselves and others safe in school (Pupil Mentoring: Summer Term 2021).

Pupils have a responsibility to adhere to the school's Behaviour & Discipline Policy and report any behaviours which are affecting the safety of themselves or others by speaking to a member of school staff or reporting via their parents.

11 Investigation allegations of bullying

Strategies to support a robust investigation include pupil and staff interviews, a review of behaviour records, communication trail from emails, Home-School Books and school Communication Books.

There is no specific timescale for the duration of an investigation although it is acknowledged by the school that it is in the best interests of all concerned for a bullying investigation to be dealt with in a timely way. The outcome of a bullying investigation will be shared with relevant parties but will otherwise remain strictly confidential.

If a bullying investigation is upheld, the school will apply the Behaviour & Discipline Policy to the perpetrators of bullying whilst also supporting the emotional well-being and mental health of the victim(s).

It may be that an investigation reveals that no bullying has taken place. In this scenario, additional support will be offered to those wrongly accused.

The possible outcomes of bullying investigations are listed and defined as follows:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

12 Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Head Teacher, 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 every two years, or sooner if required. The Chair/Vice Chair will do this by examining the school's logged paper work, and by discussion with the head teacher. Following an incident of bullying the head teacher will report to the Governing Body. Persistent bullying will be recorded on the child's file and also on SIMs (School Information Management System). Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.