



Policy for The Management of Bullying

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The Management of Bullying

Introduction

Bullying is a wholly unacceptable form of behaviour. Unfortunately, in all schools occasionally bullying will occur. This policy defines bullying and outlines the steps we will take to prevent it from happening. It also lists the strategies we have found very useful when dealing with the situations that have arisen.

Aims

At the Queens' Federation, we aim to provide the best opportunities for each child to fulfil his or her potential. We believe this can only be achieved in a well-ordered environment, where everyone takes responsibility for their actions and seeks to ensure everyone feels happy and secure.

We therefore aim:

- to encourage self discipline and motivation
- to foster responsibility and respect towards others
- to promote care for the built and natural environment

We see these aims as providing an essential foundation for later life, helping children to grow up to be happy, secure and socially responsible adults.

Bullying

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour, which is repeated and intentional. It can be physical, psychological or verbal abuse by an individual or a group. It involves the use of power to manipulate the victim and causes fear and distress.

Bullying occurs when an individual or group deliberately and repeatedly treats another child in a cruel and hurtful way. It can include:

- calling someone names
- making fun of someone in a nasty way
- stealing or breaking someone's things
- pushing someone or hitting them
- frightening someone into doing things they don't want to do.

We recognise that racist bullying may also take place in school. We define racist bullying as treating someone in a derogatory manner because of their colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, religion or language. This behaviour is unacceptable and in addition to following the guidance laid out in this policy, procedures in the Policy for Reporting and Recording Racist Incidents will be adhered to.

We also take extremely seriously all incidents of bullying which are sexual in nature (including homophobic name-calling) or which involve the stereotyping of gender.

In recent years, the use of technology has become an additional way in which bullying can take place: this is known as cyber bullying. It can involve abuse through chat-rooms on the internet or the use of mobile phones to threaten and intimidate the victims. Although most prevalent amongst secondary age pupils, we address the issues with children in Years 4 - 6, according to our policy on Internet safety, extending the discussion to include other forms of technology.

Preventative Measures

The following measures are taken in school to help minimise instances of bullying:

- Our school ethos, encapsulated in the 7 habits encourages children to foster a caring attitude towards each other

- A restorative approach to minor issues is used to help the children understand feelings and emotions from a different view.
- 'Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking' strategies are used to promote and support appropriate behaviour in school.
- The example of all the adults in school helps to demonstrate valued attitudes.
- Adults will challenge children whom they see teasing or putting pressure on others.
- Positive behaviour is praised and improvements where necessary are actively encouraged.
- All adults in school treat children with respect and endeavour to establish relationships which enable them to express their worries and concerns.
- Our PSHCE curriculum endeavours to develop self-esteem and skills for life, including how to cope with peer pressure and bullying.
- Assemblies and other appropriate occasions are used to share our school values.
- Regular whole-school themed weeks are held to promote our 'anti-bullying' ethos and ensure that everyone in school understands the part they play.
- Listening systems (e.g. listening boxes, diaries) are used to allow children to indicate discreetly to school adults if they are unhappy about something.
- An bi-annual questionnaire is used in KS1 and KS2 to evaluate pupils' sense of safety and wellbeing in school (including their experience of any bullying). The results are analysed and used by class teachers to address any issues.

Concerns about Possible Bullying

For a child to admit they are being bullied can be very difficult. Therefore, it is essential that we are vigilant in school for signs that a child may be bullied.

Concern may be caused if a child is:

- reluctant to go out to play
- regularly complaining of minor ailments
- reluctant to answer questions in the classroom
- reluctant to come to school
- regularly left out when children choose partners
- frequently absent from school
- displaying low self-esteem
- displaying nervous habits

This list is not exhaustive and the existence of one or more of these signs is not proof of bullying. However, it is important to monitor changes in children's behaviour and to take appropriate action if concerned.

Concerned staff should consider taking the following action:

- Monitor the situation in the classroom
- Inform colleagues and ask staff on duty to monitor the situation in the playground
- Create opportunities to talk with the child individually eg. asking for volunteers to complete jobs at lunch time etc.
- Create opportunities to talk with the whole class
- Speak to a member of the senior leadership team
- Record the concern on My Concern and the school bullying log.

If the situation persists, it may be appropriate to contact parents and ask if they are aware of any problems at home or school that may be causing the child to behave in an uncharacteristic manner.

Reported Cases of Bullying

If a child claims they have been bullied the following action must be taken:

- The incidents will be fully investigated.
- Appropriate action will be taken to support the bullied child.
- Consequences will be imposed and opportunities to work with the bully arranged, including the use of the 'Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking' training and strategies.
- Work with the whole class will be undertaken
- All colleagues including senior leaders will be informed of the incident to ensure vigilance around the school should a further incident occur.

As each case of bullying is unique it is impossible to have one set of procedures, actions and consequences. Each case will be handled with sensitivity and it is essential that the bullied child gains confidence that adult involvement will not make the situation worse.

Our treatment of the bully / bullies will also vary depending on our knowledge of the child /children involved.

All incidents of bullying are recorded on a central electronic system. This record includes details of the individuals involved in the incident, the form the bullying took, staff who were involved and the action they took, and any follow-up. This central record allows us to spot any patterns that emerge in bullying behaviour.

Support for a Bullied Child

Bullied children need to:

- believe they have been taken seriously and see that the incident has been handled fairly.
- be given the opportunity to discuss with the bully how the bullying has made them feel.
- be given strategies for coping in the future.

Initially, some children find the idea of adults confronting the bullies very threatening, therefore it is essential to build up the child's confidence. This can only be achieved by talking with the individual involved and by providing strategies to help boost self-confidence and trust.

Successful strategies used to support bullied children in school include:

- informing the child's parents and working in partnership to offer appropriate support.
- meeting regularly with parents to monitor the situation.
- discussing with the child where the problem occurs (eg. in the corridors, playground etc.) and monitoring these areas with care.
- giving the child a named adult who will make themselves available to talk in school should the child wish to discuss a problem.
- eliciting support of their friends
- developing the child's self-confidence and assertiveness through social skills groups and PSHCE lessons.
- pairing them with another child who has been bullied and has had a positive experience of being supported in school.
- giving the child tasks to do during the lunch time with other friendly children.
- selecting classroom groups with care, offering opportunities for the bullied child to work with children who could become new friends.
- giving the child permission to have time out from the playground (e.g. allowing the child to play with a friend in an appropriately supervised place in school.)

Strategies and Sanctions used with Bullies

Initially, it is essential to enable the bully to realise the effects of their actions. In some situations, children will be unaware of the profound effect name-calling or cruel actions can have upon other children. It is essential to discuss the issues fully and make clear the seriousness of the behaviour.

Examples of consequences that may be appropriate if children are bullying other children include:

- loss of privilege
- loss of free time
- the development of a contract
- the involvement of parents

If these efforts do not secure improved behaviour and the child / children continue to bully the same child or pick on another individual it would be necessary to take more extreme action which would include:

- excluding the child from lunch time for a fixed period
- following Local Authority Guidelines on the exclusion of children for a fixed period or permanently

Pupils who Observe Bullying

The majority of pupils in school will not be involved in bullying behaviour themselves but they are likely to know it is happening. They may even witness it taking place. These children will be encouraged to support other pupils and to become aware that they have a responsibility to act on the behalf of the bullied child.

All children will be encouraged:

- to make sure no-one is deliberately left out of a group
- not to smile or laugh when someone is being bullied
- to tell a member of staff when bullying is happening
- to include the bullied child in their games and activities
- to tell the bully to stop
- to show the bullying pupil they disapprove of their actions

These skills and attitudes will be developed through the PSHE curriculum, using teacher methods such as role-play and small group discussion.

Conclusion

We realise the management of bullying is a complex issue. We must constantly evaluate the values and practices promoted in the school and ensure that they are encouraging respect for all individuals. Through the delivery of the curriculum, we must help children to develop appropriate life skills and to understand that bullying will not be tolerated in school.

We also realise that once a child has been bullied, their confidence in adults and children can be severely tested. It is only through appropriate support over many months or years that their confidence can be re-gained and their self-esteem raised. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to do everything in our power to support such individuals and to ensure that the effects of bullying are minimised.

Most importantly, managing bullying, promoting good behaviour and supporting children who are behaving unacceptably is a shared responsibility by all.