



Kings Avenue Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

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Signed:
(Chair of Governors)

KINGS AVENUE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

OUR VALUES STATEMENT

At Kings Avenue School, we are committed to providing a caring friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a happy and safe environment. We believe that everybody has the right to be treated with respect, and that bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and efficiently. We are a telling school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

We also believe that we have a responsibility as a school to equip children with the necessary social skills to thrive in modern Britain, - these include; negotiation, compromise, resilience and emotional intelligence to be able to deal assertively with conflict, and to be able to recognise when a behaviour is bullying in nature and when it is not.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the use of force, threat or coercion to abuse, intimidate or aggressively to impose domination over others. The behaviour is repeated and habitual and mostly results in the victim/s not being able to defend themselves. One essential prerequisite is the perception, by the bully or by others, of an imbalance of social or physical power. It is important to note that children may have disputes and conflicts with their friends and peers and that isolated incidents or several disputes do not necessarily indicate bullying.

Bullying consists of three basic types of abuse – emotional, verbal and physical. It typically involves subtle methods of coercion such as intimidation. Bullying involves sustained and repeated behaviour toward one or more members of a group. Bullies aim to control, belittle, humiliate and exclude. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying may target any perceived differences that the bully/ies wish to attack.

We recognise that bullying can take many forms. Below is an example of types of bullying, this is not an exhaustive list:

- Emotional abuse, such as threatening, tormenting or intimidating someone
- Targeted exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone to harm them
- Physical bullying: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist Bullying: racial taunts, graffiti gestures
- Sexual Bullying: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic Bullying: because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal Bullying: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber Bullying: All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse
- Mobile Bullying: threats by text messaging and calls
- Misuse of associated technology: camera and video facilities

WHAT IS NOT BULLYING?

- **Not liking someone:** It is very natural that children do not like everyone around them and , as unpleasant as it may be to know someone does not like you, verbal and non verbal messages of “I don’t like you” are not acts of bullying.
- **Being Excluded:** Again, it is very natural for people to gather around a group of friends and

we cannot be friends with everyone, so it is acceptable that when children have a party or play a game in the playground, they will include their friends and exclude others. It is very important to remind children they do the same thing sometimes too and, exclusion is unpleasant, it is not act of bullying.

- **Accidentally bumping into someone:** When people bump into others, the reaction depends mostly on the bumped person's mood. If they have had a bad day, they think it was an act of aggressive behaviour, but if they are in a good mood, they smile back and attract an apology. It is very important for teachers and parents to explain that some accidents happen without any bad intentions and it is important not to create a significant conflict.
- **Making other children play things a certain way:** Again, this is very natural behaviour. Wanting things to be done our way is normal and it is not an act of bullying. To make sure children do not fall into considering it as an aggressive or "bossy" behaviour, we need to teach them assertiveness. Again, although it is not fun or pleasant, this is not bullying.
- **A single act of telling a joke about someone:** Making fun of other people is not fun for them, but the difference between having a sense of humour and making fun of someone is very fine. It is important to teach children that things they say as jokes should also be amusing for others. If not, they should stop. Unless it happens over and over again and done deliberately to hurt someone, telling jokes about people is not bullying.
- **Arguments:** Arguments are heated disagreements between two or more people or groups. It is natural that people have different interests, opinions and views and disagree on many things. The argument itself is not a form of bullying, because they want to win the argument so much. They use every means to get what they want and find a weakness in the other person. It is very important to distinguish between natural disagreements and bullying during an argument.
- **Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation or meanness:** The definition of bullying states that there is repetition in the behaviour. Therefore, anything that happens once is not an act of bullying.

All the behaviours above are unpleasant and need to be addressed, but they are not to be treated as bullying. Many times, labelling a single act of aggression can turn it into bullying just by perceiving that way.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

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
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual route
- Is unwilling to go to school
- 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 I 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
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises

- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings stop eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous or 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.

CAUSES OF BULLYING

Children who bully may be older or bigger than their victim, or they may have some other advantage which gives them a sense of power. On the other hand, they may feel less powerful themselves and bully others to gain a sense of power.

They may have had a difficult upbringing in which they have learned aggressive behaviours. They may be used to getting their own way, or they may have learned these behaviours through being bullied themselves.

Some children who bully may not be conscious of their motives and they may not even realise how badly their behaviour is affecting others. They may imagine a variety of reasons for targeting their victim. The victim may be someone who is constantly targeted: some victims seem to attract negative attention; others are not used to dealing with bullies and are easier targets. Many who experience bullying just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

Our Anti Bullying Policy works in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy, and aims to achieve the following:

- All children feeling safe and able to learn, play and enjoy the company of others
- All children treated fairly, with respect and dignity
- All children to be heard and their emotional concerns taken seriously
- All children aware of what bullying is and is not, and able to report their concerns in the knowledge that action will be taken where appropriate

We aim to achieve this by;

- Taking positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through a clear school policy on PSHE.
- Showing commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance
- Informing children and parents of the schools expectations and to foster a productive partnership, which helps maintain a bully-free environment.
- Making staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve the above aims.
- Providing opportunities for children to explore and understand their feelings and those of others in order to develop greater empathy and emotional intelligence and resilience.
- Modelling and teaching a range of social interactions so that children can develop and utilise a variety of skills to participate in social interactions.

All Governors, teaching and non teaching-staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

All children and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

As a school we take bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

STRATEGIES EMPLOYED TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF BULLYING

Step 1: “Good to tell”

- Children are encouraged to speak to an adult if they feel they are being bullied. An appropriate adult, usually the class teacher, the teaching assistant, Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officer or a SLT will sit with the child and ask them to talk about what is happening to them. Our SLT responsible for safeguarding is able to work with the children who feel unable to talk easily to other adults. We also have a range of strategies that assist children in speaking up. These include: circle times, nurture groups.
- We reassure children that it is ‘good to tell’ and that they are doing the right thing to talk.
- We look to gather as much information as possible before taking action, so that we can assess the scale of the problem.
- We do not jump to any conclusions or assume there is only one version of events.
- We record all information relating to the incident, so that a record is built up of all incidents, conversations with the child/adult, and actions taken.
- Depending on the severity of the situation, we will contact the child’s parents or carers to let them know what is happening and outline our course of action.

Step 2 “Positive action”

- Whilst following up on action relating to the bully(ies), we also look for ways to help the child learn strategies to deal emotionally with mild forms of bullying.
- In no way do we attribute responsibility for the bullying with the victim. We do however recognise that it is our responsibility to help children cope with, and develop strategies for dealing with the everyday conflicts they will face in their futures, and to help them develop an appropriate level of resilience and emotional fortitude to be less affected by the behaviour/actions of others.
- We help children to make new friends using strategies such as playtime prefects, social skills intervention groups and class circle /PSHE lessons.
- We help children to learn assertiveness skills and to display confident body language through the strategies outlined above.
- We try to help the child to rebuild their self-esteem by giving them opportunities to do things that build their confidence and make them feel good about themselves. The class teacher plays a key role in this. Other skilled adults are also used to deliver further support i.e. The SLT and Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officers. If necessary we will use external providers to help eg Educational Psychologist, CAHMS etc

Step 3: “Safe and Secure”

This step will run concurrently with step 2

- Once we have information on the nature of the bullying, we inform all relevant staff so that they are aware of the situation and are able to respond appropriately.
- If the bullying is taking place during playtimes, we typically will increase the supervision of these identified spaces where possible. Further to this the leadership team will increase their monitoring of behaviour during the week.
- If bullying is taking place in other areas we will re-distribute staff to monitor these spaces, or restrict children’s access to them to specific times (e.g. toilets, corridors, changing rooms).

Step 4: “Bully’s Behaviour”

This step will run concurrently with step 2 and 3

- Once we are aware of behaviour by a child that is judged to be bullying in nature, we speak with them, to make clear the seriousness of their actions. We do listen to their side of the story, but if it our judgement that the behaviour is bullying, we will make this clear to them, and that their behaviour, however much they wish to personally justify it, is unacceptable to Kings Avenue School.
- We inform parents or carers of their child’s actions and that they have been bullying at the school.
- Where the bullying is of a serious nature so as to constitute ‘assault’ we will consider police consultation.
- Dependant on the age of the child, the nature/severity of the behaviour, the Senior Leadership team will decide on the sanctions that the child will face. This will range from:
 - missed playtimes
 - internal exclusion of up to five days
 - external exclusion of up to five days
 - Permanent exclusion (In cases of extreme seriousness)
- Support will be made to help the bully recognise and change their attitudes and behaviour. This will usually be done in tandem with the class teacher and a Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officer. This is an important element in our approach to bullying. Whilst we recognise that bullying is not acceptable at King Avenue School we also recognise that purely punitive measures do not remove or alter bullying traits and attitudes in smaller children. Indeed, they can serve to feed a perceived sense of injustice in the bully which can trigger a resurfacing of those same behaviours.

PREVENTION

Kings Avenue School acts to prevent and counter bullying through a raft of explicit anti bullying interventions alongside more implicit positive behaviour reinforcement activities. As outlined in our Behaviour Policy, we place a great deal of emphasis on encouraging and supporting children to treat each other and adults with respect and kindness. We model and reward considerate behaviour towards others and make clear the values of respect by which we operate at Kings Avenue School.

Children are helped to take responsibility for their actions and just as importantly, to make amends for any misdemeanour. By doing so, the likelihood of bullying behaviour is diminished, as children are called to account for their actions, as well as secure in the knowledge that if they have experienced bullying by others, action is taken by the school. The Behaviour Policy outlines our recording and monitoring procedures for inappropriate behaviour.

The school’s dedicated SLT for safeguarding, along with the Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officer support children in conflict resolution with each other where-ever possible.

The Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officers also provide targeted support for children who may be exhibiting bullying characteristics, enabling them to see the impact of their behaviour, and to raise positive self-esteem in such children. Our Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officer also holds nurture groups which may also be a positive approach to enabling children to own their negative behaviour, take responsibility for it, and work towards more positive and acceptable behaviours towards others.