



## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

*This school policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching and support staff and has the full agreement of the governing body.*

*"This policy reflects the philosophy of the Equals Opportunity Policy, the Mission Statement and the School Aims in relation to the whole curriculum".*

**This school operates a No Smoking Policy (see No Smoking Policy).**

### **1. A Whole School Policy**

- A school **community** consists of pupils, teachers, governors, non-teaching staff and parents.
- All staff and pupils within the school community have **the right to be treated fairly** and equally and with respect by others within the school and to work within a **safe and secure environment**.

### **2. Statement of Intent**

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. However, we acknowledge that many of our children are physically vulnerable and have difficulty communicating their feelings. It is therefore important that we are even more pro-active on their behalf. Fairfields is a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

### **3. What is Bullying?**

Fairfields School caters for children with a range of special needs and disabilities and we have to acknowledge that some pupils are more inclined to display inappropriate behaviour e.g. kicking, pushing, biting etc. Also the occasional disagreement or quarrel between children should not necessarily be interpreted as bullying.

Bullying is 'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'. DCSF 2007.

Bullying can be:                      Types of Bullying Behaviour

- Emotional                      -being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures)

- Physical -pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist -racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual -unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic -because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Religious -focusing on belief as different and a threat
- Culture -taunts about being different
- Verbal -name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Disability -taunting because of appearance or health conditions
- Related to home circumstances -verbal abuse about home or family members.

#### 4. The Legal Framework

Section 61 (4) (b) of the School Standards Framework Act 1998 requires Head Teachers to determine measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.

DCSF Guidance (Safe to learn DCSF,2007)

DfEE Circular 10/99 – Social Inclusion: Pupil Support, requires that:

- Head Teachers put in place effective strategies against bullying, which are developed and put into effect by everyone in their school, including pupils.
- Governing Bodies regularly review their school's policy on bullying.
- Schools explain the arrangements for pupils to report bullying to staff, and how staff will investigate them, in prospectuses and other documents for staff, pupils and parents.

Other legislation relevant to this area, regarding possible criminal liability are:

- Race Relations Act 1976

The Act defines three types of discrimination: direct, indirect and victimisation. Local Authorities have a duty to ensure that services, including education, are provided and functions carried out with due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination.

- Protection From Harassment Act 1997

This Act made harassment, and stalking, a criminal offence. For a person to be guilty of an offence, he/she must have pursued a course of conduct which he/she knew or should have known would cause the victim to be distressed or alarmed.

- Human Rights Act 1998

Within the Human Rights Act, any matters brought before the Court must be treated on their individual merits. It is likely, however, that cases of bullying – clear breaches of an individual's human rights – will be brought.

The case of *C v Trafford MBC* (October 2000) highlights the school's duty of care to all its pupils. C was the subject of verbal bullying and the court held that the school had breached its duty of care in that it did not:

- Take sufficient action when information came to light;
- Review and re-assess the situation when it was clear bullying was on-going
- Ensure a consistency of approach by staff;
- Keep appropriate records of meetings, agreed actions or correspondence

It is recommended, therefore, that all schools review not only their policies in this area but also how those policies are implemented in practice.

## **5. OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY**

- All governors, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and support 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.
- To ensure that all parents and pupils know that 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.

## **6. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

A child may indicate by signs or changes in behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Doesn't want to go on the school bus
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins truanting
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at nights or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Changes in their work pattern or achievement
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go "missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- 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

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

## **7. Prevention**

The incidences of bullying can be reduced by:

- Promoting a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying
- Valuing and celebrating all children's achievements
- Conducting an anonymous school / class survey
- Involving the children in writing a set of class / school rules (School Council)
- Writing stories / poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- Listening to or reading stories about bullying
- Circle time activities and discussions focussing on bullying and why it matters
- Role play activities
- Encouraging children (where appropriate) not to bring unnecessary toys / items to school
- Making play areas that are not visible 'no go' areas e.g. behind bushes / trees and around unsupervised corners

## **8. Staff Procedures**

- Defuse situation
- Listen carefully and take what is said seriously
- Report bullying incidents to staff and in serious cases to Senior Management
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

As outlined in our Behaviour Management Policy adult behaviour towards children should be based upon the following guidelines.

It is important that it is made clear to the pupil that it is their behaviour which is not acceptable and not them as a person. The setting of limits is an acceptable part of behaviour management; consideration is given to their individual needs and age. The school aims to make pupils aware of behaviour expectations and how they can be achieved. It may be appropriate to assist pupils to cope with these situations through direct teaching methods, which encourage the pupils to take responsibility for their own actions and become self-disciplined. This will involve cross-curricular aspects such as PSHE, SEAL, Behaviour policy, and the school's Child Protection policy.

**Confrontations and disputes with pupils are more likely to be resolved successfully for both teacher and pupil if:**

- A co-operative relationship already exists
- They are not tried to be resolved in public
- The teacher does not use dominant, threatening behaviour
- Respect is shown towards pupils
- The pupil's feelings are acknowledged
- A compromise can be offered
- A calm atmosphere is maintained. Any anger shown should only express one's concern for the pupil, not one's attempt to intimidate them
- The tension can be relieved with genuine concern. After any dispute normal relationships should be restored as soon as possible
- Staff may have to cope with pupils who behave violently. It is important that violence is controlled and contained.

**9. Outcomes / Sanctions**

Any action taken following a bullying incident will obviously depend on the severity of the incident and the age, understanding and ability of the child (children) involved. It is important to show that bullying will not be tolerated but sanctions should not involve the use of anger, aggression and humiliation. One or more of the following actions may be considered appropriate:

- Asking the bully (bullies) to genuinely apologise
- For recurring problems children could be given 'time out' for a clearly defined period
- Keeping him / her in at break times / lunchtime play
- Moving to a different place in class
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Giving special work to do
- Moving class
- In serious cases, fixed term or permanent exclusion

If possible the pupils will be reconciled. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

**10. Helping the Victim**

Possible strategies to help victim cope with bullying situations include:

- Ignore the bullying and pretend not to be upset – turn and walk quickly away and tell a grown up;
- Use humour – it is more difficult to bully a child who refuses to take the bullying seriously. This is especially useful with verbal bullying;
- Stay with groups of children, if possible
- Respond to taunts saying the same thing over and over – this is called the broken record approach. For example for a taunt such as "You've got glasses" tell the child to respond with "Thank you" and just keep saying it over and over. It is a silly response and it becomes boring for the bully after a while.

Obviously appropriateness of these strategies depends upon the age, ability and maturity of the child.

### **11. Helping the Bully**

When working with a child who is bullying try to:

- Remain calm and find out the facts
- Talk to the child to find out if she or he is upset or has been bullied and is lashing out as a reaction
- Find out if the child realises that she or he is bullying and hurting someone else – sometimes children doesn't know how their actions affect others
- Set up a behaviour chart using stars and stickers
- In consultation with the child's parents seek counselling or professional help if the child does not respond after a reasonable time

### **12. Reporting Recording and Monitoring**

- Any bullying to be recorded on the Incident forms held in the office.
- Notes will be made on behalf of Pupils who feel they are being bullied and what took place to resolve the situation.
- Parents to be informed of any bullying in writing.

### **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed in line with an agreed School cycle