



# Anti-bullying Policy

*This policy should be read together with the Behaviour & Relationship Policy and e-Safety Policy.*

## 1 Introduction

At The Downs Primary School and Nursery, we acknowledge that bullying sometimes happens and our policy is to deal with this issue swiftly and effectively.

Children need to feel safe at school, confident in all aspects of their school life and happy in their relationships.

Young children frequently find the inevitable conflicts, which arise in day to day situations with their peers difficult to handle and may describe this as 'bullying'. At The Downs, we help children to identify if the behaviour of someone else causing them to feel upset is linked to friendship issues and fall outs with a peer or group of friends or is in fact bullying, where someone is purposefully intending, through planned and thought out methods to hurt, cause upset and victimise someone.

Adults help children to work through every day conflicts using strategies such as: talking through their feelings and through our teaching of school values. Children are taught how to manage conflict and aggression and friendship issues and they are taught to empathise with others, learning their actions can have an effect on others.

Our school definition of bullying, devised with children, is:

**'Bullying is when someone deliberately hurts you or your feelings over and over again. This can be through words or actions; in person or online.'**

## 2 Helping Children to deal with conflicts

Conflict in everyday life is inevitable and children are taught through PSHE lessons how to develop strategies to deal with common conflicts appropriately. Children are taught that that it will not always be possible to like everyone, that people fall out and become friends again and we respect the feelings of others and accept differences in people in a responsible manner. As adults, we know that hurting people physically is not safe, acceptable nor an effective way of dealing with conflict. When conflicts arise, we help children to:

- deal with their anger by talking through feelings and helping them to use coping strategies to deal with their anger.
- accept that anger is an emotion that everyone has sometimes and this can be managed.
- talk through their feelings with their peers in an open and honest manner
- forgive others involved in conflicts and recognise that holding grudges with others will affect their wellbeing overall
- calm down and give children space or time alone if needed before talking through what has happened.

Adults will listen and comfort children who find conflicts upsetting and encourage children to try and solve fall outs they have through a 'talking approach'



### 3 Bullying in school

Where bullying arises in school, it is **always** taken very seriously. We encourage parents to contact class teachers to talk through concerns if they are made aware of any bullying at home by the child and children are regularly reminded in class and through class assemblies, who to speak to in school to speak out about bullying.

We rely upon parents and carers to inform adults in school about any bullying that they are aware of. Parents are encouraged to inform their child's class teacher in the first instance.

Our school anti-bullying procedures are as follows:

Adults will need to use their professional judgement to determine whether the disclosure from a child or parent is bullying or whether it is an isolated fall out with another child. Useful phrases to ask a child to determine this are:

- Has this happened before with the same person or group of people?
- Has this just happened today or is this happening lots and lots in school?

If it is felt that bullying is being reported 'My Concern' will be completed by the adult. This will then be seen by the deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL) and allocated as a task to a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) to investigate further.

The class teacher will be informed and any details from the investigation will be passed on through 'My Concern'. The SLT member dealing with the concern will inform parents of the victim and perpetrators of the course of action chosen.

A decision is made by a senior member of staff, based upon the knowledge of the situation and background details and the type of behaviour if:

- A 'support group' approach is needed for the victim and perpetrator
- A 'support group' approach is needed and a consequence for the behaviour of the child/children involved in bullying
- A consequence is needed for the perpetrator only

The information is then passed, by the SLT member, to our Learning Mentor (DDSL) who will set up a support group if necessary. The learning mentor will ask the victim and class teacher for advice on peers to include in the group.



**Step One:** The Learning Mentor will talk to the child who has been bullied or where there is bullying suspected. The child will be encouraged to record his or her feelings through drawing, poetry or by talking.

**Step Two:** The Learning Mentor meets with the group of pupils who have been involved, including the named perpetrator/s. This could include any bystanders and peers who are positive role models. The victim is given the choice to be included in the group or opt out of this.

**Step Three:** The Learning Mentor talks to the group about how the victim feels, sharing the expressed views of the victim or the victim can share their feelings with the group if they choose to.

**Step Four:** Each member of the group is asked for ideas about how to help the victim feel happier. Their suggestions are accepted and valued.

**Step Five:** The Learning Mentor will pass the responsibility to the group to solve the problem and writes notes on suggestions with guidance if needed. Arrangements are made for the group to meet again in about a week to review how things are going for the victim.

**Step Six:** The Learning Mentor passes a copy of the plan to the class teacher and the class teacher will meet with parents of the victim and perpetrator to discuss how the group has chosen to solve the problem and asks parents to contact them if there are any further concerns.

**Step Seven:** The Learning Mentor will meet with the group and the victim, separately or as part of the group (choice of the victim), after a short time, usually a week, to monitor the situation and to celebrate successes. This meeting may need to be repeated if the victim still feels there is an issue.

The time between when the bullying has been reported to a member of staff and when the support group will be set up with the Learning Mentor will be dependent on the availability and timetable of the Learning Mentor. However, a plan will be put in place within a period of 3 school days.

#### 4 The Victim

Any victim of bullying will be reassured that the bullying is not their fault and they are not to blame. Children will know that adults will support them to deal with the bullying and that sharing this information is the right thing to do. A victim of bullying also needs to have some control over the situation so they are involved in making choices



about talking to the person who has been showing bullying behaviour with an adult and peers supporting them through this. They may choose not to be part of this process. Being assertive with people who are not being respectful or kind is encouraged in school but also victims are supported to play with children they like and with whom they feel safe. We reassure the victim that the bullying will stop and also class teachers will inform parents if the disclosure of bullying has been made to a school adult. If a child is a victim of bullying, as well as our support group approach, the child will also be offered support from the school learning mentor in some 1 to 1 sessions if school adults deem this to be needed.

## **5 The Perpetrator**

To empower the victim, the victim will be encouraged to talk to the person who has displayed bullying behaviour and explain how their behaviour has made them feel. We ask the perpetrator to listen and reflect upon how their victim feels and how they would feel in the same situation. Other children in the support group, can support the perpetrator in trying to empathise and help them to consider ways of dealing with their feelings in a healthier way. This is often an effective way to get the bully to stop. Adults try and find out what is causing the perpetrator to behave in this way as often, bullying arises if a child is very unhappy, insecure and angry. Whatever the reason for this behaviour, the child needs to know that this behaviour is unacceptable and there will be a consequence for the behaviour they have displayed and the hurt they have caused. They will be asked to apologise to the victim and because of the serious nature of bullying, it is our policy to involve the parents of the perpetrator at an early stage to gain their help and support. Consequences could involve, staying in for a period of time at playtimes and lunchtimes, an internal exclusion to another class for a period of time decided by a senior member of staff or exclusion to a PCLC school.

## **6 Cyber bullying**

Increased use of technology can greatly enhance learning but it has also provided increased opportunity for cyber bullying. Messages sent on mobile phones or via the internet can quickly reach large numbers of people and, for a victim of cyber bullying, can be devastating.

Children are not allowed to have mobile phones in the classroom and they should be handed in to the office upon arrival to school. If any child does bring a phone into the classroom it will be kept safely in the school office until a parent collects it.

In school, use of ICT including the internet, is protected by the Local Authority fire wall and the school fire wall. However, we are increasingly encouraging children to use computers at home to support their learning and we have far less control over pupil's safety.

### **6.1 Responding to cyber bullying**

In any communication with parents relating to use of computers at home we stress the importance of ensuring children's safety.



All pupils will be informed as part of the ICT curriculum about e –safety and encouraged not to take part in cyber bullying.

- They will also be encouraged to offer support to anyone effected by cyber-bullying
- Taught what they can do if they become a victim of cyber bullying.

When we become aware of incidents of cyber bullying we will:-

- Encourage victims to keep evidence in the form of making screen shots or print outs
- Provide advice on ‘blocking’ and contacting the service provider or police
- Take steps to identify the perpetrator
- Impose sanctions and use our school ‘anti-bullying procedures’

### **7 If the bullying continues**

If the bullying continues and a child/children continue being targeted, then more serious consequences follow. Initially this is in the form of an exclusion. This may take the form of: withdrawal from class, from the playground, an afternoon or even a whole school day and the child will be expected to complete learning tasks. Multiple day exclusions may take place at a PCLC school.

If bullying persists we will then look for different opportunities for him/her to continue their education in another school.

### **8 Monitoring and evaluating**

The policy is monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher and senior leadership team in consultation with all staff. It will be reviewed and amended annually. All staff are responsible for monitoring the behaviour in school by observation, both formally and informally. Any concerns should be reported to the Class teacher and the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher in line with the ‘anti-bullying procedures’