



Anti-bullying & Harassment Policy

Montgomery Junior School

This Montgomery Junior School policy and guidance was

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Ratification

Chair of Personnel Committee:	Signed: Print Name:
Chair of Governors:	Signed: Print Name: Mr N Allen

Review Date:	September 2012
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ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY FOR MONTGOMERY JUNIOR SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

At Montgomery Junior School we place great emphasis on children feeling safe and secure within their environment for effective learning to take place, and we will not tolerate bullying or harassment. If children are experiencing bullying, name-calling, or other forms of harassment, we cannot offer equal opportunities or equal access to learning.

Effective implementation of this policy will contribute to the achievement of the five Every Child Matters outcomes, with particular regard to 'Staying safe', 'Enjoying and achieving' and 'Making a positive contribution'.

AIMS

- To define the range of behaviours that are aggressive and oppressive
- Increase understanding of how these behaviours may affect others
- To establish clear and consistent procedures for dealing confidently and effectively with behaviour that is defined as unacceptable
- To establish positive relationships with parents so that they have a clear understanding of the school's policy and procedures
- To eliminate behaviour that prevents all pupils from participating in the full range of learning experiences and from achieving their maximum potential
- To encourage all pupils to overcome/challenge discrimination and oppression without doing so at the expense of others
- To build self esteem and self confidence in all pupils so that they can use these qualities in their relationships with others
- To create an ethos of shared values in which all pupils feel equally secure, highly valued and entitled to seek support

Relevant legislation

To meet the requirements of

- the Race Relations Act (2000),
- the Disability Discrimination Act (1995),
- the School Standards and Framework Act (1998)
- the Human Rights Act (2000)
- Education Act (2000)
- Children Act (2004)

We aim to develop a positive ethos by:

- Acknowledging everyone has a responsibility to deal with bullying
- Encouraging children to talk openly about concerns
- Developing trust between children and adults
- Inspiring the confidence of parents in the school's ability to support all children
- Recognising and valuing the talents and skills of everyone in school
- Appreciating the importance of staff as role models for children

A DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is not easy to define. Sometimes it can involve hitting, punching, or kicking, but more commonly includes threats, teasing, name-calling, isolation and interfering with or taking possessions. It may also involve the use of mobile phones and the internet through messaging and email. Bullying may be distinguished from other unacceptable forms of aggression in that it involves dominance of one pupil by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident.

Bullying **is not** the one off incident which tends to be part of school, particularly playground life. It is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It is usually pre-meditated, carefully thought through, and perpetrators are aware of its implications and consequences.

Bullying can happen anywhere:

- In the playground
- Travelling to and from school
- In lessons
- Outside school over the Internet or mobile phones

Bullying is always about power. Children feel powerless to stop it. Parents often feel powerless to know how to help.

Behaviour that is deemed to be bullying or harassment may be defined as any hostile or offensive act. The behaviour is such that:

- It interferes with the peace and comfort of the person who experiences it
- It is unsolicited and unwanted
- The person fears for her/his safety, feeling threatened, humiliated, embarrassed
- The quality of life of the person is reduced
- It cannot be justified by the victim's behaviour, dress or language
- It is systematic and takes place over time

A DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

Harassment is often 'impersonal', directed at people because of what they are rather than who they are. People are harassed because of the group to which they belong:

- *Because they are a girl/woman*
- *Because they are from a minority ethnic background*
- *Because they are travellers*
- *Because they are disabled*
- *Because they are gay/lesbian or are perceived to be gay/lesbian*
- *Because they do not fit the perceived image of masculinity/femininity*
- *Because they are different from others in some way*

RECOGNISING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

The following types of 'incidents' may be helpful in helping to recognise incidents of bullying and harassment:

- Physical assault against a person or group e.g. because of colour and/or ethnicity, sex, sexuality, disability. This includes inappropriate touching.
- Physical intimidation such as jostling, lifting skirts/taking down trousers etc. this would also include using dangerous substances/objects to intimidate.
- Derogatory name-calling, insults and/or jokes. Extortion of money or property.
- Graffiti
- Destruction of property; 'borrowing' without permission.
- Insulting gestures/making fun of/ridiculing e.g. sexual innuendo.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Provocative behaviour e.g. wearing racist badges or insignia
- Bringing materials such as leaflets, comics, magazines, offensive objects into school that insult, abuse or provoke.
- Incitement of others to harass and bully.
- Derogatory in the course of discussion or lessons relating to the ethnicity, colour, sex, sexuality or impairment of others.
- Spreading rumours.
- Attempts to recruit others to racist organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for cultural, religious or social differences e.g. food, music, dress, family lifestyle.
- Refusal to co-operate with others e.g. because of their ethnic origins, sex, sexuality, disability.

BULLYING – POSSIBLE SIGNS

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he /she is being bullied. If you are concerned and become aware of any of the following, you may wish to ask if someone is threatening or bullying the child.

Children may:

- Be frightened to walk to and from school
- Be unwilling to come to school i.e. unexplained illnesses
- Begin doing poorly in their work
- Have belongings damaged or possessions go missing
- Become withdrawn, start stammering
- Become distressed, stop eating
- Report broken friendships
- Attempt suicide
- Cry themselves to sleep
- Have bad dreams/ nightmares
- Have unexplained bruises or marks
- Begin stealing
- Refuse to say what is wrong
- Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above

Staff and parents in particular should trust their instincts. Parents know when their child is unhappy and should contact the school, even if what they know and feel is only a 'hunch'.

BULLIES – SOME CHARACTERISTICS

Bullies may:

- Feel inadequate or lack self-esteem
- Feel insecure
- Be bullied themselves by parents/siblings
- Be victims of physical/ sexual/ emotional abuse
- Have been socialised into a 'success by any means' attitude
- Not understand why their behaviour is unacceptable
- Lacking in the ability to empathise with victims
- Be 'spoilt', lack inner controls on behaviour
- Lack social skills for making demands in a non aggressive way

VICTIMS – SOME CHARACTERISTICS

Victims may:

- Feel inadequate, lack self esteem
- Be anxious and insecure individuals
- Be normally submissive, repressing feelings and own wants and needs
- Resort to crying/ temper outbursts when threatened
- Lack social skills for defending themselves
- Have been over-protected at home

STRATEGIES

To minimise incidents of bullying we:

- Express the positive climate through all aspects of school life such as curriculum, teaching methods, physical environment, rules, relationships with parents etc.
- Use appropriate parts of the curriculum to teach values that show bullying to be unacceptable (e.g. circle time and PSHE, ICT lessons etc)
- Use appropriate parts of the curriculum, and involve a range of partners to deliver programmes that help children develop social skills and assertive strategies to deal with bullying/conflict
- Ensure that everyday life at school encourages and provides opportunities to practise social skills

- Encourage all pupils to take an active role in deciding what bullying is and how it should be dealt with
- Encourage children to regard 'telling' as both acceptable and responsible
- Regard attending to bullying behaviour as a priority
- Monitor incidents of bullying and harassment
- Ensure the adequate supervision of children at all times and throughout the school site
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the school **behaviour policy**
- Ensure that bullying is kept as a high profile issue through school assemblies and participation in events such as 'Anti-Bullying Week'
- Ensure the early identification of vulnerable pupils
- Provide a secure environment, for example our Study Club, at lunch time, with opportunities for children to develop confidence and social skills

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF

Staff have a responsibility to:

- Provide opportunities for pupils to report incidents
- Investigate and deal with any incident of bullying, keeping a record of incidents and follow-up action taken
- Discipline bullies, recognising that punishment alone will not solve the problem, they too need to be helped
- Keep parents informed about how the situation progresses
- Support the child who is being bullied
- Promote good discipline and acceptable patterns of behaviour based on proper respect for authority
- Look for signs of potential problems before they arise
- Watch for early signs of stress in pupils
- Make clear to all pupils, their parents/carers the consequences of bullying
- Be sympathetic to/understanding of parents who think that their child may be being bullied – school will always listen to concerns
- Take seriously any reports of bullying - follow the school **behaviour policy**
- Approach other professionals for advice and help when appropriate

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

On witnessing an incident:

- Stay calm – do not make snap decisions or attach blame
- State briefly and firmly that the behaviour is inappropriate
- Distance the children - don't let the incident become a spectator sport
- Assure everyone involved in the incident that it will be taken seriously and action will be taken
- Refer the incident to senior staff as soon as possible (where appropriate)
- Record the incident - time, names, date, class, what, where, action taken

On being told of bullying:

- Be sensitive to what the child is saying, take it seriously
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell
- Ensure the child's safety while the incident is being investigated
- Record the incident objectively, take note of any injuries and action taken, and give the record to the headteacher for his log
- Where parents are notified a record should be kept, also details of any outside agencies involved
- Staff should use their professional judgement and inform senior staff where appropriate.
- Serious incidents should be reported immediately.

Protection and support

Comfort, support and guidance will be given to pupils and staff who have suffered bullying and harassment. The approach will depend on the severity of the incident but all will receive acknowledgement of their distress and be assured that procedures will be followed to deal with the incidents. Assurance will also be given as to their safety.

In order to monitor bullies and their victims, information will be shared with relevant staff, for example through meetings with teaching assistants and midday supervisors. The Leadership Team will review all serious incidents

and decide on any further actions that need to be taken.

INVOLVEMENT OF PUPILS

Children should actively participate in decisions that affect them and should be supported in taking responsibility for their choices and decisions. This will happen through:

- Regular consultations with pupils to identify the extent of bullying
- Peer support programmes, for example 'Playground Pals'.
- Opportunities for pupils to report concerns anonymously and confidentially.
- School Council; representatives have the opportunity to report concerns brought forward from classes
- Discussions with our Anti-bullying Ambassadors.

INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS

Parents need to know that what they report will be taken seriously and will be acted upon, and that their child will be protected by the school. The first point of contact with school will normally be the class teacher, or parents may wish to see a senior member of staff (Assistant Head, Deputy Head or Headteacher)

- Usually the best way to make time to talk is to arrange an appointment
- Do not encourage children to retaliate with violence. This increases the risks of the child being hurt or disciplined themselves
- Break the circle; help the child to speak out
- If a child bullies at sometime or another, parents are encouraged to work with us to overcome the problem

When incidents are reported we will inform parents of the 'victim' and the 'perpetrator' of what has been done and keep them well informed about incidents involving their children are being dealt with. A record will be kept of the discussion.

CURRICULUM

Teaching about bullying takes place in PSHCE through the SEAL programme, and is also the focus for work during 'Anti-Bullying Week' annually. Cyber-bullying issues are covered within the annual Internet Safety sessions.

