

Morden Mount
School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Written by: Lesley Chapman
Updated March 2017

MORDEN MOUNT PRIMARY SCHOOL – ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy statement on Equality and Community Cohesion

Working within this policy we aim to make sure that no-one experiences less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their 'protected characteristics' as follows:

- Their age
- A disability
- Their ethnicity, colour or national origin
- Their gender
- Their gender identity(they have reassigned or plan to reassign)
- Their marital or civil partnership status
- Being pregnant or having recently had a baby
- Their religion or belief
- Their sexual identity and orientation

(Equality act 2010)

Rationale

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. The school operates a zero tolerance approach to bullying – bullying must be challenged immediately, dealt with sensitively and in a sustained manner.

Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying in school. This policy is designed to ensure that as a school we are alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching 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.
- 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

Definition

Bullying can be described as being a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour.

Bullying can be:

- **Exclusion** a child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities
- **Emotional** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- **Racist** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures and harrassment
- **Sexist** sexist taunts exclusion and harrassment
- **About a child's disability** nasty taunts, exclusion
- **About a child's religion** nasty taunts, exclusion
- **Sexual** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments, sexual taunting and harrassment
- **Homophobic** because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- **Verbal** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- **Cyber** All areas of internet, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities.
- **Damage to Property or Theft** pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. The bully may use physical threats to force the pupil to hand over property to them

Context of Bullying

Bullying may happen daily or infrequently. It may be in school or out of school. It may be quite subtle and more difficult to deal with.

A bully gets pleasure from others pain and distress; usually focussing on the young and timid.

Bullying must be identified and dealt with. This requires us understanding types of bullying, reasons for bullying; where bullying takes place and how it affects those bullied.

Aims

There are two components to effective anti-bullying practice: preventing bullying incidents and responding to them. At Morden Mount Primary School we aim to:

- Positively encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences and to make a commitment to take action to end the bullying and provide support for the bullied pupil.
- Establish a safe, supportive environment within the school involving direct teaching about bullying that promotes resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Ensure that the whole school understands what bullying means, including what a bully is, what a victim is and what a bystander is.
- Stress the role of the Bystander – the person who can intervene and help the situation. We encourage the bystander to get involved and not just watch and collude. We encourage them to report incidents or support someone getting bullied.
- Encourage children to report incidents without feeling they are telling tales
- Take incidents seriously, they are investigated and if necessary, acted upon, with clearly defined procedures.
- Provide an opportunity for pupils to indicate and discuss worries and concerns.

Signs and Symptoms

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.
- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus.
- Begs to be driven to school.
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- 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 in school work.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money and starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses if any of the above.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Is nervous and 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.

Procedures for dealing with a complaint about bullying from either a child or a parent on behalf of their child

- Reassure the parent and / or child that you are taking the complaint seriously and that you will deal with it that day.
- **Do not tell the child to ignore it.**
- Teachers must meet with all of the children concerned
- The victim should be allowed to tell those doing the bullying what actions are upsetting him/her.
- It must be made clear to the perpetrators that their actions are bullying.
- Usually the children will acknowledge that they are bullying and will be sorry. They usually apologise without being prompted and will often suggest ways to improve matters.
- It is essential that everyone has a chance to put their point of view across and have their say. Sometimes the assumed victim may be engaging in aggressive behaviour which is causing an aggressive response from other children.

THESE ACTIONS ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH. THE REQUIRED IMPROVEMENT MUST BE MONITORED BY THE CLASS TEACHER IF BULLYING IS TO BE EFFECTIVELY ELIMINATED.

- Once an improvement in the situation has been agreed the class teacher must meet with all children 3 times in the next 5 days to monitor that there is no further bullying.
- In the second week 2 meetings must take place with all pupils.
- In the following 2 weeks there must be one meeting each week.
- The meetings will be short and if going well need not take longer than 2 minutes to check that everything is going well.
- A note must be kept of all meetings, who is present, the outcome and the date.
- If the required improvement has taken place the meetings may be discontinued after one month but children should be told to come and see you again if the bullying reoccurs.
- The bullying should be referred to the head teacher if there is no improvement after two weeks or the bullying reoccurs once the meetings have stopped.
- Records of previous meetings will need to be seen by the head teacher. The head teacher will also require a full discussion of steps taken so far to prevent the bullying.

Dealing with parents

- Inform parents of the action the school will take.
- Instruct them to come back to see you if the bullying reoccurs at any time in the near or distant future.
- With children in FS, KS1 or those with communication difficulties staff should meet with the parents and the child so that they and the child understand the actions taken and what they should do if the problem persists.

Teaching Assistants and Midday Supervisors

Midday Supervisors please deal with any immediate bullying and report the incident to the Lead Teaching Assistant. The Lead TA will need to know the name of all the children involved.

Teaching Assistants should report the complaint to the class teacher.

Referring bullying

The head teacher will follow the same procedures. If after one week there is no improvement the parents of all pupils concerned will be contacted and invited to a meeting individually to discuss the situation. The class teacher will be expected to attend this meeting.

The above actions are for dealing with the most common forms of bullying by pupils - name calling, pushing, hitting, not speaking and leaving out of games or groups of friends. Where the actions of a bully are very serious and causing serious harm to another pupil the class teacher may refer the bullying immediately and after discussion with the head teacher contact parents immediately. This would include any sexualised behaviour, deliberate serious physical harm, forcing someone to steal or harm others. This not an exhaustive list and staff must as always use their own judgement.

Staff in any doubt about an incident should always speak with one of the senior leaders in school i.e. the assistant head, deputy head or head teacher.

The executive head teacher expects all staff to adhere to this procedure for managing bullying effectively.

What can children do if they are being bullied?

Each term or when incidents occur, class teachers will discuss bullying and reinforce the following strategies:

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive. Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

What can children do if they know someone who is being bullied?

Class teachers will discuss and reinforce the following strategies:

- Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers will deal with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Role of Parents

Parents have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in your children – for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their usual standard.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- If a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child on the playground or involve an older child to deal with the bully. Please inform school immediately.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.

School Ethos/ Prevention

There will be ways in which the school can develop an understanding of bullying by raising awareness in a variety of ways.

Publish the school's views on bullying

Establish and follow the school policy

Make use of the curriculum:-

- Collective worship
- PSHCE lessons or Circle Time
- Visiting Drama groups
- Take part in national anti-bullying weeks/ workshops/assemblies

We will use agreed methods of helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of school rules
- Signing a behaviour contract.
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying.
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly.
- Using 'power of one' contract to create awareness
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 020 7354 8321

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Visit the KIDSCAPE website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.