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## *Educating our children to shape the future*

### **Anti-Bullying Policy -**

#### **Principles and Values**

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. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or in the local community. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

#### **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.

All of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that school is a safe place for children and adults to be, whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

#### **What Is Bullying?**

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

In other words, bullying at Mears AshbyCE is considered to be, “ unacceptable behaviour which occurs **‘lots of times, on purpose’.**”

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying can be:

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

Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sexual, unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality Direct or indirect Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Cyber bullying: All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse

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Mobile threats by text messaging and calls

Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera and video facilities, Ipad, games consoles,

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Religion
- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place during the school day, in the classroom, in the corridor or toilets, on the playground, out of school whilst on residential visits, day visits, in group activities and between families in the local community.

### **Bullies and Victims**

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of bully over victim.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual,
- The strength of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc

Research shows that children, whose parents are over-protective, may fall into the category of bully or victim in almost equal numbers. This makes these children more vulnerable to being bullied or becoming bullies, but this group is not exclusive.

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Staff must remain vigilant about bullying and approach this in the same way as any other category of Child Abuse; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied; they may be too young or have Special Educational Needs.

Staff should be able to identify children who may be vulnerable and who could fall victim to bullying as well as those who may demonstrate bullying behaviour.

Provocative Victim – research shows that some children are provocative victims – this means that they actively seek responses from others, often using their own behaviours to incite a reaction from others to either bring attention to themselves or to get others into trouble.

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### **Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

### **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 or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"

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- 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's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- change in attitude to people at home.

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

### **Outcomes**

1. All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher or by a senior member of staff.
2. Parents of the victim may also be questioned about the incident or about their general concerns.
3. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place. e.g.: a parent being informed about their child's behaviour.
4. In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with bullying e.g. police, counsellor, Mere Outreach Support etc.
5. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
6. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
7. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded in the Bullying Log and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

### **Prevention**

At Mears AshbyCE we use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying through class assemblies, PSHE and Citizenship lessons, SMSC Curriculum, the school Vision and Assembly Themes, Anti-Bullying Team, Anti-bullying week focus. Friendship Stop, E-Safety,

The ethos and working philosophy of Mears AshbyCE means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property.

Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded.

Staff will regularly discuss bullying, this will inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying.

Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular discussion.

Take part in Anti-Bullying week.

Staff to follow the equality policy; welcoming every child to our school. Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of children or an individual child, even if this is done in jest. This gives other children advocacy to use this difference to begin calling names or teasing.

Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Groups/gangs bring about the imbalance of power and must be broken up from around the central bully.

Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings.

In the 2012 Lifestyle Survey some children said that they had encountered some form of bullying.

Children are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school or class rules
- Writing a personal pledge or promise against bullying
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that bullies are dealt with quickly
- If a child feels that they are being bullied then there are several procedures that they are encouraged to follow: (not hierarchical)
- Tell a friend
- Tell your School Council rep
- Tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust
- Go to the Friendship stop
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust
- Discuss it as part of your PSHE time
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given

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## **Recording of Bullying Incidents**

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must be prepared to record and report each incident.

In the case of racist bullying, this must be reported to the Headteacher and Racism Co-ordinator. General incidences of bullying should be recorded in the Behaviour Log this would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with children, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying. Confirmed cases of bullying must be recorded following the ROC procedure, as with any case of Child protection.

The Headteacher should advise which level of ROC should be used.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the children involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that bullying may be prevented from happening in the future.

Incidents of bullying will be discussed with the Governing Body (Safeguarding Governors)

## **Advice to Parents**

As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied

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1. Report bullying incidents to the class teacher, Racism Co-ordinator or Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff and the Headteacher notified.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

Do Not:

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be the bully or by speaking to their parents.
2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

## **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

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Visit the Kidscape website [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) for further support , links and advice.

For a copy of Kidscape's free booklets "*Stop Bullying*", "*Preventing Bullying*" and "*You Can Beat Bullying*", send a large (A4) self-addressed envelope (marked "Bully Pack") with 6 first class stamps to:

Kidscape

2 Grosvenor Gardens

London SW1W 0DH