

South Otterington Church of England V.C. Primary School

Anti Bullying Policy

This document does not suggest that such anti-social behaviour in the form of bullying is rife within our school. It should be interpreted that everyone connected with South Otterington Church of England Primary School is firmly against such behaviour and feels that it is essential that all parties are fully aware of the school anti-bullying policy.

Bullying takes many forms. It can be short term or can continue over years and may involve:-

- physical or verbal attacks;
- name calling;
- malicious gossip;
- damaging or stealing the property of the victim;
- coercing the victim into acts which they do not wish to do.

Whatever form it takes it is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt or threaten or frighten someone else. Some bullying takes place on the way to and from school. However, research has found that the vast majority of bullying takes place in the school environment. Much of the reported bullying tends to be from games that have got out of hand or when aggressive behaviour spoils other children's activities. Both boys and girls use teasing as a means of bullying but boys are more inclined to use more physical means whereas girls are more inclined to use more subtle means such as exclusion from the social group. Many boy bullies pick on victims from both sexes but girls predominantly bully other girls.

Even children as young as three or four have learned that aggressive behaviour helps them to get their own way. Sadly they may also have learned that creating fear in the victim is a rewarding experience, having learnt from older siblings or their parents or other external influences how to hurt or bully others.

Why is it important to refuse to accept bullying behaviour?

- The safety and happiness of pupils
- Educational achievement
- Providing a model of correct/acceptable behaviour
- To uphold our reputation as a caring school

The relationship between discipline and bullying is recognised; our behaviour policy is based on fostering and rewarding good behaviour and the refusal by everyone to accept poor behaviour.

Preventative steps: /Steps to prevent or discourage bullying

1. The staff work together to promote positive and harmonious breaktimes, giving opportunities for constructive play. After discussion between staff and children any additional purchases will be costed and then funded, either through school capitation or via a bid to the Friends of the School.
2. The school will promote an environment where children can confide in an adult or an older child if they are victims of bullying. All members of staff will be vigilant.
3. Members of staff will continue to respond quickly, positively and effectively in line with our behaviour management policy. In this way, children will see that bullying is always dealt with; this approach will discourage bullying behaviour.
4. The perpetrators of such behaviour must also be helped. Reasons behind behaviour should be discussed, as should the effect on the victims. The use of 'Friendship Fix (restorative practices) ensures that the views of all parties are heard.

How can pupils respond?

Bullying – how can you help stop it!

- Don't allow someone to be deliberately left out of a group
- It helps if you don't smile or laugh if you see someone being picked on
- Tell an adult - a parent, teacher, dinner lady
- Ask the bullied person to join in **your** game
- Tell the bully to stop what they are doing
- Show that you don't approve, but don't join in.

If you are being bullied:

- Say "Don't do that"
- Walk away
- Tell an adult in school or an older pupil in your school. Tell a parent.

How can parents respond?

Advice to parents

- Watch for signs of distress in your children. There could be an unwillingness to attend school; a pattern of headaches or stomach aches; equipment that has gone missing; requests for extra pocket money, damaged clothing or bruising.
- Take an active interest in the child's social life: Discuss friendships; how playtime is spent and the journey to and from school.

If your child has been bullied:

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience

- Make a note of what your child says - particularly WHO was said to be involved; HOW often the bullying has occurred; WHERE it happened, WHAT has happened and WHEN it happened.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher.
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.
- Advise your child not to try and buy the bully off with sweets or other presents and not to give in to demands of money.
- Together identify those places where the bullying takes place and work a way to avoid them. If this is not possible advise that he/she make sure that there are other trusted people about.
- Do not encourage your child to hit back. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to your child's nature. More positively, encourage your child to recruit friends. A child who has friends is less likely to be bullied.

If your child is bullying other children:

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They don't know it is wrong.
- They are copying older siblings or other people in the family or within external situations whom they admire.
- They haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends.
- Their friends encourage them to bully.
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

To stop your child from bullying others

Talk with your child: explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other unhappy.

- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher, explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing; discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop him/her bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is co-operative or kind to other people.

Talking with teachers about bullying:

- Try and stay calm - bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of the incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened - give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action we intend to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with us; let us know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

How will the school respond?

What we will do in cases of persistent bullying

- Reports on incidents of persistent bullying will require greater depth of action. These will be recorded in writing to enable common themes, timing, perpetrators, victims, etc. to be pinpointed.
- The teacher/supervisor will inform the Headteacher about the incidents. The child concerned will normally be dealt with by loss of privileges or by loss of freedom at playtime/lunchtime.
- A special watch, both in the classroom and the playground will be kept on any child who proves that he/she has a tendency towards inappropriate behaviour.
- If allegations are made about their child, parents will be asked to visit school to discuss the situation. In seeking their help, no parent must be made to feel guilty or in some way responsible for their child's behaviour. It is parental support that we are seeking.
- The governing body will be informed of any serious incidents of bullying.
- In extreme cases the School Behaviour Support Team will be consulted and as a final resort after making every effort with both child and his/her parents, the Governors have the power to exclude the aggressor from the school.

If you are not satisfied:

Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by our school might like to consider the following steps:

- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the headteacher; keep a record of the meeting.
- If this does not help, please see the Complaints Procedure.
- Contact local or national parent support groups for advice.