



Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by the Governors of Viewley Hill Academy on:12.11.14

Date	Amendment	Signed
14.2.17	SIC Review; updates on page 7 to reference 'Helping Hands' boards in classes and use of CPOMS.	

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

Bullying at school can have a profound effect on children's lives and can have a lasting effect on them in adulthood. It can undermine self-esteem and self-confidence and often results in children becoming bullies themselves.

The policy on Anti-Bullying has been drawn up within the school's ethos of promoting positive behaviour.

Aims:

- To create within our school community, an atmosphere/ethos of trust, which values, respects and protects the rights of each of its members to be within a safe and secure environment.
- To develop an acceptance, by individuals, of responsibility for their own actions.
- To develop within the ethos and curriculum of our school attitudes, skills and activities which will aim to prevent all aspects of bullying.
- To instil in children that bullying is unacceptable and that reports of bullying will be taken seriously, recorded and acted upon.
- To foster trust among members of the school community so that bullying incidents can be reported, discussed and dealt with appropriately.
- To encourage and foster active parental support in achieving those aims.

The school community includes: pupils, all teaching staff, support staff, kitchen staff, school governors, school nurse, school police liaison officer and other visitors to school.

What is bullying?

Bullying is repeated behaviour which uses power to hurt, frighten or cause unhappiness to another.

This behaviour may include:

- Name calling.
- Hitting, kicking, punching, inappropriate contact.
- Damaging or stealing property.
- 'Ganging up' on people.
- Teasing about personal or physical differences/disabilities.
- Teasing about family/domestic/cultural/racial situations.
- Threats

- Shouting, swearing, verbal abuse.
- Extortion.
- Malicious gossip.
- Forcing someone to do something they do not wish to do.
- Use of homophobic language or gesture
- Cyber bullying (use of online sites or mobile devices)

What can we do about it and how can we achieve our aims?

The underpinning values held at our school are found in our Vision Statement and Behaviour Policy and are set within our whole school aims. We aim to encourage self esteem, self respect, self-control, caring and respect for others. We also discuss many of these values in other curricular areas like Health, Citizenship and Religious Education. We study bullying as part of our Personal and Social Development programme and in our whole school assemblies.

As part of our strategy for promoting positive behaviour, we look at attitudes, skills and activities which will prevent bullying:

- * We value and listen to children's contributions.
- * We help the children learn and practice the skills required to build good relationships with other children and adults within the school and the wider community.

Raising Pupil Awareness

Activities through which this can develop:

- Playing games.
- Role play/simulations.
- Stories, poems, media.
- Play situations.
- Writing.
- Behaviour problem solving scenarios.
- Circle Time.
- School Council meetings.
- Participating in drawing up agreed whole school rules.
- Whole school assemblies.
- 'Buddying' and 'monitor' systems.
- Whole school events e.g. Anti-bullying day/week
- National events and competitions to raise awareness
- School Improvement planning to address tolerance and co-operation

Through these activities the children share experiences, think of other peoples' feelings, share opinions, explore difficult feelings, put themselves in other peoples shoes, develop self respect, assertiveness, co-operation and independence/interdependence.

Where can bullying occur?

It is a widely held view that most bullying occurs on the way to and from school, and on the school premises, such as the playground. More recently it is occurring online and on mobile communication devices.

Bullying off the School Premises

Viewley Hill is not directly responsible for bullying off the school premises; however, if both the victim and the bully are from our school action will be taken as if the incident has occurred within the school, and this includes informing parents.

If a child from Viewley Hill is involved in a bullying incident with a pupil from another school we will liaise with the other school to ensure that there is no reoccurrence. Where possible, Viewley Hill will support pupils who have been bullied, especially on their way to or from school, by pupils from another school or by other persons.

Developing a Telling School

Some children may find it difficult to report bullying. There remains amongst many the notion that 'telling' is wrong. Children who are bullied may fear that the action taken may lead to the problem intensifying. Others may feel embarrassed or ashamed about being bullied. The school employs several strategies to enable bullying to be uncovered including regular consultation with pupils:

- School-wide promotion of our 'STOP' definition of bullying
- Parental Survey
- Pupil survey
- School Council Meetings
- Buddies' or pupil monitors
- Circle-time activities
- PSHE lessons
- Worry or 'Thought' boxes
- Pastoral support

Practical advice shared with pupils:

1. Tell the perpetrator to STOP.
2. If you are bullied tell a member of staff or someone at home.
3. Try to ignore silly comments or teasing – don't say anything back – try and walk away.
4. Stay with friends when playing.

Why do Children Bully?

- They don't know it is wrong.
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family 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.

Raising Teacher Awareness

Signs which may indicate bullying:

The child may:

- Be unwilling to come to school.
- Begin to do poorly in school work.
- Become withdrawn.
- Start acting out of character, by for example hitting other children.
- Develop stomach aches or headaches.
- Want to stay in at break-times.
- Have a cut or bruise after playtimes.

What is the school doing to help parents combat bullying?

- Keeping parents informed of policy developments and relevant activities in the School Newsletter.
- Publishing the academy Anti-Bullying Policy online
- Raising awareness at information meetings eg PAT Meetings, Governors' Meetings, School Council and class meetings etc.
- Providing information for parents about how to combat bullying and spot possible signs of bullying, see Appendix 1

Advice for Supervisory and Support Staff:

- Be aware of isolated children, and try to involve them in a sympathetic group.
- Discourage 'rough play', to ensure that everyone is enjoying play time activities.
- Check 'out of the way' places regularly.
- Never ignore aggressive or bullying behaviour.
- When dealing with an act of aggression or bullying, it is better to remove the victim from the scene as soon as possible.

Bullying

At Viewley Hill Academy, bullying is regarded in any shape or form, to be a very serious matter, and one that warrants immediate investigation.

Bullying can take a variety of forms, but is generally an action, taken by one or more children, with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally. The children are made aware of this by the display and discussion of 'STOP' around school. STOP means Several Times On Purpose. 'This is displayed on our Helping Hands' board in each classroom.

At Viewley Hill Academy we want parents and children to understand that we listen we believe and we act.

Action to be taken

Immediately a child has notified a member of staff or parent that an incident of bullying has taken place, an investigation must proceed. It should never be ignored.

Procedures:

- The situation must be investigated and the outcome communicated to those involved.
- Bystanders, as well as the children involved, should be interviewed.
- If a child reports an incident of bullying, it should be taken seriously and appropriate inquiries made.
- If the bullying has been carried out by a group, consideration should be given to interviewing the children on their own and/or later as a group. If the children make certain comments in the individual interviews, they may then be asked to make the same comments in the group situation.
- Feelings of guilt, shame, anger and fear may lead victims to deny that they have been bullied. It is only later that partial disclosure, and eventually full disclosures, and acceptance of the problem, are achieved. Similarly, bullies may deny they have bullied by rationalising their behaviour eg 'It was only a joke', 'I didn't really hurt him', 'He asked for it' etc. These rationalisations need to be exposed. Bullies are always responsible for their actions.
- When the inquiry has been completed, consideration shall be given to bringing the bullies and victims together in a joint session, if it is thought that this will contribute to resolving the problem.
- It is essential to follow-up after an incident to check that the bullying has not started again. This will be done after approximately two weeks and again within the following half-term.
- Direct reports or suggestions of bullying are logged in CPOMS and investigations carried out. Records are made of these investigations and also on discussions with the child, parents and follow up discussions at a later date; these are also logged in CPOMS.
- Lunch time incidents are brought to the attention of the class teacher and/or KS leader at the end of the lunchtime session.

- On some occasions the teacher shall be required to make a written report of the discussions held and actions taken along with a senior member of staff, usually the Headteacher.
- The parents/carers of the children shall be informed of the situation and invited to contribute to its resolution.
- A monitoring system will be adopted which enables the child to report further incidents to senior staff without embarrassment and to ascertain that further incidents have not occurred.

Five Key Points

- **never ignore suspected bullying**
- **don't make premature assumptions**
- **listen carefully to all accounts-several pupils saying the same thing doesn't mean they are telling the truth**
- **adopt a problem-solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves**
- **follow-up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed**

What should pupils do if they see bullying?

- When you see someone being bullied, take action – **tell** someone. Watching and doing nothing, can suggest you are supporting the bullying.
- You should inform an adult immediately if you do not wish to become involved yourself.
- Do not tolerate hurtful behaviour in your group of friends.

Appendix 1

Advice for Parents

What should parents do to combat bullying?

Early intervention is the key to dealing with any behaviour problem such as bullying. There is no magic formula when dealing with such aggressive behaviour. Any advice followed should be applied **consistently**.

1. Teach responsibility for self and others.
2. Teach respect for self and others.
3. Teach care and gentleness.
4. Teach the importance of truth and honesty.
5. Provide clear, consistent standards of behaviour.

Signs of bullying could be:-

- Bed-wetting.
- Asking to be taken to and from school when this hadn't previously been the case.
- Change their route to school.
- No longer seeing a group of friends.
- Show changes of mood.
- Become distressed or stop eating.
- Crying themselves to sleep.
- Having nightmares.
- Refuse to say what's wrong.
- Having unexplained bruises/cuts.
- Continually losing pocket money etc

Practical Advice for Parents:

1. Encourage your child to talk about what has been going on in school, and talk through any minor incidents calmly to ascertain what has happened.
2. **Inform the school immediately** if you feel there may be a bullying problem.
3. Encourage your child to tell a teacher or the playground supervisors if they or any of their friends are experiencing difficulty in or out of school.
4. Watch out for signs of stress in your child – headaches, sore stomachs, reluctance to come to school – they can be indications that all is not well.
5. Investigate if toys/money starts to go missing.
6. Take an active interest in friendships and out-of-school activities.
7. Supervise situations where bullying may occur, eg walking to and from school.
8. Avoid unsupervised exposure to violence on television/videos/computer games. Spend some time discussing the different forms of violence – reality versus fantasy.

If your child is bullying other children

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware. Children sometimes bully others because:-

- They don't know it is wrong.
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family 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.

What should parents do if their child is the bully?

- Remain calm.
- Don't bully or hit your child – this will make it worse.
- Try to find out why your child is bullying.
- Don't hesitate to ask for help. At the school, we can put you in touch with expert help.
- Set realistic, firm guidelines and rules to help your child control her/his behaviour.
- Ensure that your child apologises, either in person or in writing to the child she/he has bullied.
- Bullies need to achieve some success to make them feel good about themselves. Help to find something else they can do well and often their behaviour will change.

To stop your child bullying others:-

- Talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and makes others 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 to 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 or her bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he or she is co-operative or kind to other people.