



## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### **Principles and Values**

The Governors and Staff at Sunningdale School are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all our pupils and staff. It is not an expectation of the school that staff or pupils are subjected to physical or verbal abuse or harassment in any form. The Governors and Staff believe that effective teaching and learning occurs when pupils and staff feel safe and happy and free from anxiety and stress.

All the pupils at Sunningdale School have special educational needs e.g. severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties, sensory, physical, medical need, A.S.D, challenging behaviour or any combination of these. Our approach to anti-bullying therefore needs to take into consideration on the one hand, the impact of inappropriate behaviours on our physically and emotionally vulnerable pupils, while on the other, the influence of specific types of special needs on the behaviour of some children. Whilst the school recognises this dilemma it is also dedicated to combating both the rare cases of 'true bullying' that may occur and the possible, while unintentional, incidents that may make pupils feel threatened, unsafe or afraid. The school will act promptly and firmly to combat bullying and aspects of behaviours that may impact upon the emotional and well-being of all, whenever and wherever it occurs.

Where appropriate, pupils will be made aware of how they can draw their concerns about bullying to the attention of staff in the confidence that these will be carefully investigated and, if substantiated, taken seriously and acted upon. All staff will be made aware of their responsibilities for ensuring the safety of more vulnerable pupils who, because of the impact of their special needs or additional language issues, are unable to communicate any issues that arise. The school uses different approaches linked to the individual needs of the child to hear 'pupil voice'.

### **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 school 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 our school is a safe place for children and adults to be.

### **What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, and psychological. It can happen face to face or through cyberspace.

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

**Bullying can be:**

Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
Physical pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
Racial 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 Twitter,
Facebook misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging and calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities, I pad, games consoles.

**Bullying may be related to:**

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

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

**Discrimination-The Equality Act 2010**

Under the Equality Act it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of;

- Age
- Being or becoming a transsexual person
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or having a child
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

These are called ‘Protected Characteristics’. A person is protected from discrimination in the following areas:

- Work
- Education
- As a consumer
- When using public services

- When buying or renting a property
- As a member or guest of a private club or association.

### **Perpetrators and Victims**

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another.

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

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours 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; because they may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

### **Staff**

Bullies are often in positions of power or authority over their victims. Bullying may occur between professional teaching staff, support staff and voluntary workers. Signs in victims are indicated in the following list that is neither inclusive nor exclusive:

- General low morale
- Increased level of staff turnover
- High rates of absenteeism
- Frequent disputes, complaints and grievances
- Isolated members of staff
- Inefficient team working.

### **Signs and Symptoms for Parents and Staff**

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 worried or upset to come to school
- changes in behaviour
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill in the morning
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### **The Curriculum and Learning**

Issues associated with bullying and its management will form part of the PHSE curriculum and may involve:-

- Developing appropriate interactional and social skills.
- Exploring feelings and emotions.
- Exploring the impact of a person's behaviour on others.
- Exploring the hurt bullying behaviour may have on others.
- Role play to explore such feelings.
- Being kind to others, sharing.
- Developing group skills.
- Developing strategies that address challenging bullying behaviour.
- Not allowing someone to be deliberately left out of a group.
- Telling a member of staff what is happening.
- Staff will promote and model co-operative behaviour and anti-bullying values.
- Discussions and agreement of school, class and outdoor play rules,
- Identifying and celebrating individual differences and talents and promoting mutual.

### **Procedures for the Management of Bullying**

All staff are responsible for implementing this policy and reporting any incidents of bullying immediately to the SLT who must report it to the Headteacher.

The following procedures must be implemented by all members of staff:-

- Identify and consistently apply school policies, responsibilities and respond to bullying or inappropriate behaviour, to ensure a safe school environment for all.
- View bullying from the perception of the victim and not the bystander.
- All incidents of bullying will be challenged by staff and immediate action taken to secure the safety of the victim.
- Report any incidents or suspected incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour to the SLT who will inform the Head teacher and an investigation will take place.
- For pupils with specific special needs or language problems that make it difficult to raise their concerns or fears, staff must be vigilant to ensure their safety and observe and explore any changes in their behaviour that may result from being bullied.
- For verbal pupils, staff must listen sympathetically to them - if a pupil thinks it is important, it is important.
- In the event of a complaint of bullying, the school will carry out an investigation into the allegation.
- The parents of all pupils involved will normally be informed of the allegation.
- Records will be kept of all such investigations.
- The parents who have made the allegation will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
- If the school concludes that bullying has taken place then the parents of all children involved will be contacted by the school and a strategy will be agreed to ensure that the bullying is stopped.
- Accurate records of the incident and of any follow up action will be kept.

### **Pupils and Staff:**

Pupils and staff who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed.
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- The use of identified interventions

### **Other Awareness Raising Activities**

Many occasions during school can be used to raise awareness of bullying, its effects and how to handle being bullied. These include playtimes, assemblies, R.E., circle time, PSHE.

### **Responsibilities of the School and Each Individual Member of Staff**

- The school and each individual member of staff have a responsibility to:-
- Have a clear understanding of the school policy,
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all,
- Respond promptly, report and record issues of bullying,
- Promote through the curriculum the development of appropriate responses to inappropriate behaviour and an awareness of the impact of one's own behaviour on others,
- Provide/attend appropriate training opportunities.

### **Responsibilities of Parents/Carers**

- Report any concerns immediately to the school.
- To be alert to and inform the school about significant behaviour changes and signs of distress to their children.
- To work in partnership with the school on encouraging positive behaviour, valuing differences and promoting a sensitivity to others;
- Inform staff of changes in individual pupil circumstances which may affect the ways in which pupils respond to school life.

### **Advice to Parents**

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

1. Report bullying incidents to the class teacher, Headteacher or Senior leader
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 will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the child using unacceptable behaviour towards others, to change their behaviour.

#### **Do Not:**

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child 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.

