



## **Somerville Primary School**

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

At Somerville Primary School, our community is based upon respect, good manners and decency. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop to their full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed; but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated at Somerville School. We aim to treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

We are a Rights Respecting School and ensure children are familiar with the articles from the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Children. In this policy the following Articles should be adhered to:

Article 36- You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).

Article 37- No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

Article 39- You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly injured.

### **What is Bullying?**

"Bullying is long standing violence, physical or psychological, caused by an individual or group and directed against an individual who is not able to defend himself in the actual situation, with a conscious desire to hurt that individual or put him under stress" (Court definition)

Bullying is behaviour which...

- intentionally involves unwanted negative actions
- involves a pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time
- reflects an imbalance and abuse of power

- causes distress, feelings of isolation, lack of confidence and fearfulness happens face-to-face or through cyberspace.

## Types of Bullying

Types of bullying may include:

- **Physical-** Physical bullying occurs when a person uses overt bodily acts to gain power over peers. Physical bullying can include kicking, punching, hitting or other physical attacks.
- **Verbal Emotional-** verbal bullying is when an individual uses verbal language (e.g., insults, teasing, ridiculing family etc) to gain power over his or her peers. Verbal bullying can be very damaging and may have long term psychological effects on the victim.
- **Cyber-bullying-** Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology, such as phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumours sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles
- **Prejudice related bullying-** Prejudice-related bullying (also known as Identity-based bullying or bias bullying) refers to any form of bullying related to the characteristics considered unique to a child's identity, such as their race, religion, sexual orientation or physical appearance. These forms of bullying are not only targeted at an individual, but reflect negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group to whom that individual identifies with (or is believed to identify with).
- **Racist-** Any hostile or offensive action against people because of their skin colour, cultural or religious background or ethnic origin can be classed as racist bullying.
- **Homophobic-** Bullying on the basis of perceived sexual orientation or gender identity is a specific type of bullying and is defined as homophobic bullying. Not only lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth experiences homophobic bullying, but also learners who do not identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.
- **Sexual-** Any bullying behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, that is based on a person's sexuality or gender. It is when sexuality or gender is used as a weapon by boys or girls towards other boys or girls - although it is more commonly directed at girls. It can be carried out to a person's face, behind their back or through the use of technology.

◦**Disability and SEN-** Name calling, innuendo or negative stereotyping based on disability or learning difficulties. Excluding from activity on the basis of disability or learning difficulty.

◦**Gifted and talented-** Name calling, innuendo or negative stereotyping based on high levels of ability or effort. Ostracism resulting from perceptions of high levels of ability

◦**Young Carer related or looked after children-** Name calling and teasing due to loss of parents and the pupil being in care, or due to a parent that needs caring for. Exclusion from activities on the basis of parents not being around.

◦**Socio-economic Status-** Negative stereotyping, name calling or ridiculing based on financial circumstances.

## **Disclosure of incidents of bullying.**

A child experiencing bullying can feel sad, upset and alone. Very often the victims are intimidated by the bullies into keeping it a secret or they are scared that things could get worse. Due to the reluctance to speak out it is imperative that at Somerville Primary School that we have zero tolerance messages going out to the whole community.

Children, parents and families must be provided with the opportunity to speak out, as this may be difficult due to reluctance we have to provide a variety of communication options.

- **All staff-** Safeguarding is a critical part of the schools life. All adults within the school must be willing to listen to children and respond. By doing this pupils will know that their issues will be taken seriously, investigated and dealt with.
- **Post box-** The pastoral team must keep a post box that pupils can post letters to the mentors. This box must be checked daily without fail.
- **Attendance-** Attendance concerns to share with the senior learning mentor and possible signs of attendance/bullying links to be investigated.
- **Parents-** parents must have the opportunity to report concerns to a variety of staff, those key people will be advertised within the news letters.
- **Pastoral team-** The pastoral team have to be actively listening and looking for signs of bullying.
- **Other pupils-** Children will often tell their friends about any issues and problems. All children need to be trained that it is good to tell.

## **Prevention**

At Somerville we believe that prevention is better than cure the following actions are taken to raise awareness and prevent bullying issues.

- Themed assemblies
- Celebration of Anti-Bullying Week (November)
- Structured Literacy lessons for each year group – Anti-Bullying focus What is bullying? What different types of bullying are there? Pieces of work collected from each class to create school display.
- Competition – design a poster (displayed around school)
- Anti-Bullying wristbands on sale
- Theatre Group – delivered an Anti-Bullying assembly to whole school
- Anti-bullying initiatives and messages publicised on the web site and in news article.

## **Intervention**

All reported incidents of bullying must be taken seriously and be fully investigated. A typical action would be as follows.

- Listen to the complaint and record what has been said and by whom.
- Investigate by listening to all parties involved with allegation.
- Decide if it is a bullying incident, friendship issue or just a one off behavioural issue.
- Find out if it has already been reported or dealt with.
- If there is bullying use the school bullying or racist incident form to record findings.

- Show evidence of findings to senior mentor or a member of the leadership team.
- Action sanction that is decided to be carried out.
- Parents of both parties to be contacted and meetings when required to take place.
- Incident form must be given to the senior mentor so all incidents can be recorded in the bullying log book.
- Year heads to be informed and kept up to date.
- Follow up meetings to take place and any pastoral support to be provided.

Each case of bullying will be different and any sanctions imposed must be proportionate to the incident. Parents must be informed if bullying is occurring.

#### possible sanctions

- **Responsibility revoked**- Children can lose monitor or responsibility this can be temporary or permanent depending on the seriousness of the incident.
- **Exclusion**- In extreme cases the Head teacher may choose to exclude pending further enquiry.
- **Internal exclusion**- This sanction will be considered when the bully and the victim are in the same class. The bully may be moved class temporary or in some cases this may be permanent.
- **Suspension**- The Head Teacher may use fixed term suspension as a sanction and pupils can be sent home with set work to carry out. Official letters have to be written to the parents and pupils parents must meet with senior mentor and a member of the senior leadership team.
- **Warning issued**- Incidents that are considered minor, first time offenders or friends of the bully may be given a firm warning that must be recorded on the incident form.
- **Loss of playtime/lunchtime**-Children can be kept in at lunchtime or playtime for a fixed term they can be given duties to do to keep them busy.
- **Parents called for a meeting**- In most cases of bullying parents of the victim and the bully must at the very least be contacted. For more serious cases it is essential that meetings are held.
- **Loss of a treat or school trip**- The leadership team may decide to threaten or even ban children from future trips or parties.

Exclusion, suspension, move class or loss of a treat or school trip can only be imposed by the leadership team. It is essential that sanctions are fair and that consistency across the school is maintained. All records, investigations and allegations must be passed on to the senior learning mentor so they can be logged in the bullying log book.

### **Support and after care**

Once a bullying issue has been dealt with and actions and sanctions have taken place there may be a need for extra mentoring support. The mentoring could be for the victim in the shape of self esteem work or could be social skills work for the bully.

At the very least there needs to be two follow up meetings with the victim to ensure that the issues have gone and that they feel safe. Parents also have to be informed to put their minds at rest.

M.Hughes    November 2016