

# Prudhoe West First School



## Anti-Bullying Policy 2014/15

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### Anti-Bullying Policy

#### Introduction

Prudhoe West First School aims:

To provide an enjoyable, caring, safe and supportive environment in which moral values and positive attitudes to learning are central to the ethos of the school.

To value all members of the school community, promote equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum for all pupils, developing the skills and attitudes necessary for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.

To provide a foundation for life in the school and the wider community by promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils, enabling them to become good citizens.

We have high expectations for our pupil's behaviour and conduct. We teach and promote the following positive moral and social values:

- Taking responsibility for your own behaviour.
- The ability to make choices about our behaviours.
- Being honest and telling the truth.
- Having mutual respect and being polite to one another.
- Caring for others.
- Caring for the environment and the school building.
- Trying to do our best.
- Valuing other's people's efforts.
- Accepting and recognising individual differences.

Bullying of any kind is against all that we teach and this policy sets out guidelines and advice to ensure that the whole school staff, pupils and parents/carers in partnership, take steps to ensure that bullying does not occur in our school.

#### Aims of this policy

Prudhoe West First School seeks to provide a safe, secure and positive environment where:

- Children and young people can achieve their potential, making full use of the opportunities available to them.
- Children and young people involved have the right to have themselves and their property treated with respect and to be free from intimidation.

Prudhoe West First School seeks to protect these basic human rights by ensuring that those acting on their behalf:

- Are proactive in setting up a range of preventative measures.
- Actively listen to children, young people and where appropriate their parents or carers.

### **Consultation process**

This policy was drawn up by the Headteacher in consultation with the SLT, staff and governors. The aims and advice have been shared and discussed widely with pupils and parents. The policy takes account of DfE recommendations and the Human Rights Act 2000 and Northumberland County Councils own anti-bullying policy.

The policy will be revised biannually in the light of up-to-date recommendations by the Headteacher and the SLT in consultation with the Governing Body. Revisions and changes will be shared with pupils and parents where appropriate.

### **Definition and identification of bullying**

Bullying may be defined as the abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour which may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It is repeated over a period of time on those who feel powerless to resist with the intention of causing distress.

Bullying should always be taken seriously. All bullying is unacceptable.

Bullying does not only occur between children. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and children.

In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a child or a child abuses their power over another child, bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be treated as such.

**Bullying** is deliberately hurtful. It typically has seven elements:-

1. *an initial desire to hurt*
2. *the desire is expressed in action*
3. *someone is hurt either physically or emotionally*
4. *there is an imbalance of power*
5. *it is without justification*
6. *it is typically repeated*
7. *there is evident enjoyment by those who bully*

Bullying can also stem from thoughtlessness, such as in name calling or stem from institutionalised attitudes, for example in relation to gender or race. That does not make it any less unacceptable.

### **Bullying can typically take three forms**

1. Physical bullying *hitting, kicking, taking belongings*
2. Verbal bullying *name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks*
3. Indirect bullying *spreading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups or cyber-bullying*

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics. However, pupils can be called names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation or some form of disability.

The use of mobile phones to text insulting, obscene or threatening messages is both verbal and indirect bullying. The use of phones, including camera phones to harass or transmit derogatory text messages and or photographs must also be viewed as bullying.

Bullying is always significant to the person being bullied.

## **Bullying by Race, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation or Disability**

### **1. Racist Bullying**

Following the Stephen Lawrence incident, the 1999 MacPherson report defines racist bullying as “any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”

A child or young person may be targeted for representing a group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery / mimicry
- Physical aggression or threats
- Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation’s premises
- Racist inciting of others
- Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs
- A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play

### **2. Sexual Bullying**

Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material
- Graffiti with sexual content

In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would normally be involved as these are criminal offences.

### **3. Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying**

Pupils do not have to be lesbian, gay, transsexual or bi-sexual to experience this type of bullying. In most cases being different can be enough (In a survey 82% of teachers in 300 secondary schools in London were aware of verbal incidents. Only 6% of these schools referred to this type of bullying within their policy). Staff will tackle homophobic bullying including the use of anti-gay derogatory language or name calling.

*For further information and guidance consult the DfE publication on homophobic bullying “Stand Up for Us”*

#### 4. Disabilities

Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children and young people may not be able to articulate their experiences.

#### **Equal Opportunities**

Care should be taken that there is no bias when dealing with cases of bullying with regard to pupils and staff of different race, gender, sexual orientation or those with different religions or beliefs.

#### **Recognising Bullying**

A recent survey showed that bullying in schools is widespread. Although bullying can occur on journeys to and from school, most takes place in school. Research shows that 75% of bullying in primary schools takes place in the playground. In secondary schools it is also most likely outdoors but other hotspots are classrooms, corridors and toilets, especially when supervision is minimal.

Both boys and girls bully and can bully as individuals or as members of a group. Children who bully others come from any kind of social or cultural background. Adult bullying of children also occurs and is equally unacceptable.

Bullying always creates inequalities and is damaging to all those involved. The person being bullied, the person who bullies and those who witness or know about the bullying are all affected in some way. Those who bully can experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties. Research evidence has shown that those who bully are more likely to engage in anti-social activities and have a greater prevalence of poor mental health.

A child or young person could have experienced both being bullied and having bullied others. Bullying is not a natural part of growing up and should never be accepted as such.

Those who bully may show aggression through for example, poor control of impulsive actions, a positive view of violence or a desire to dominate. They may exhibit anxiety through for example low self esteem or difficulties in making friends. They may be easily led in joining in bullying or in standing by whilst bullying takes place.

Those who bully may experience difficulty in admitting what they have done; be reluctant to admit that what they have done is wrong; suppress feelings of guilt; feel no remorse and repeat the hurtful action, especially if this goes unchallenged.

Those who are bullied may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and feel that they have done something to attract the bullying. Any child or young person can be bullied.

Those who are being bullied may experience:

- Unhappiness
- A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation
- Reduced self esteem and self worth
- Poor academic performance
- Exclusion from normal social experience
- A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting
- A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide

Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:

- Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities
- Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building
- Fear of walking to school or of using public transport
- Underachievement
- Books or clothes destroyed
- Possessions and money going missing
- Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
- Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and / or aggressive
- Stammering
- Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions
- A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints, headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns
- A marked change in well established patterns of behaviour

Those who are bullied are often reluctant to say what is wrong or to seek help.

### **Strategies and Procedures for dealing with bullying**

Any incidents of bullying will be dealt with according to the school's Positive Behaviour Management Policy.

The following strategies will be used to minimise bullying: -

- Raise awareness through the curriculum to get pupils to talk about bullying in order for them to understand how abhorrent it is, ie. Anti-bullying week
- Have clear procedures for investigating incidents and make all staff aware of them.
- Give pupils messages about bullying via role-play, assembly stories, poems etc.
- Praise good behaviour in order to give pupils an incentive to play happily with each other.
- Where possible try to encourage pupils to play games with each other giving them a purpose and direction to their play.
- The School Buddies play an important role in breaking down barriers for children reporting instances of bullying, whilst stopping short of peer mentoring.

- The school fosters an ethos of openness and encourages pupils to report their concerns. They could ask a friend to voice their concerns for them.
- Pupils and parents/carers know that the school, whilst having no legal duty outside of the school precinct, will treat all reported instances of bullying on the journey to and from school with equal seriousness.
- Have regular consultations with the School Council to find out any concerns regarding bullying.
- Involve all children in how to deal with bullying through our PSHE programme.
- Have clear provision for follow up of those who are bullied and those who bully.

#### **What the school will do:**

- Always take reports of bullying seriously.
- Staff (including non-teaching staff) will inform the Headteacher and other colleagues of any incident they witness
- Where an allegation of bullying is made staff will talk to the children involved separately as well as gather information from others who may have witnessed aspects of the alleged incidents.
- If necessary, the parents/carers of both children involved will be contacted by the school and given details of what has transpired. Parents will also be informed about what action has or may be taken.
- Keep records of any bullying and note discussions and any actions taken.
- Reassure the children involved offering concrete advice and support.
- When appropriate inform and involve the children in any action that is to be taken.
- Make it plain to the children when behaviour is unacceptable and try to encourage them to see others points of view.
- Always explain clearly to all involved any action which will be taken.
- At the first discussion with a parent/carer and other relevant parties the Headteacher will agree on an appropriate course of action. A written record of this action plan will be kept. The arrangement will continue until all parties are happy that the situation has been satisfactorily resolved.

This policy has been quality risk assessed.

A.Sutcliffe PSHE Coordinator

Established	November 2011
Reviewed	September 2014
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