

Achieving excellence through leadership

Anti Bullying Policy

Although there is no legal definition of bullying, the Department for Education states that bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Aims:

The aim of this policy is to try to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. We are committed to ensuring that the school community works together to create a happy, safe, caring and stimulating environment. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school community are responsible for recognising bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our school's Behaviour and Pupil Discipline policy.

Giles Junior School is committed to a policy of inclusion, equality and justice. We provide a warm, caring and safe place for all our children and adults so that they can learn, play and work in a relaxed and secure environment. Within Giles Junior School we want:

- all children to feel safe to learn, play and enjoy the company of others.
- all children and adults to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity.
- all adults to feel happy and safe in the workplace.
- everyone to listen carefully to what children and adults have to say and to treat all accounts with due seriousness.

We believe that bullying of any kind is totally unacceptable and that everyone has the right to be treated with respect. Bullying is not tolerated in our school and we take all incidents seriously. We are proactive in teaching our community to understand how others may be feeling and better ways of behaving or responding to situations. Bullying inhibits full participation in education and learning, cultural, social and leisure activities. We believe that where bullying is challenged effectively our community will feel safe and happy and we will demonstrate a school that cares.

The school will set about doing this in the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirements for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in the Children's Act 1989, the SEN and Disability Act 2001, the Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2), The Children Act 2004, and Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2021)
- All governors, teaching and non teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will know the school's policy on bullying.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PSHE lessons, Protective Behaviours, 7Habits, etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work and express themselves, free from fear of being bullied.

At Giles Junior School, we acknowledge that bullying may happen from time to time and that bullying may also happen to adults within the workplace (see Bullying and Harassment, Grievance and Whistleblowing policies). When bullying does occur, everyone should feel able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our school policies.

All children and young people have the right to be protected from physical, emotional and mental violence; a right enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children also have the right to learn, live, travel and play in a safe environment where they can thrive and achieve their full potential.

It is important that children feel safe in school and they should know who to speak to if they do not feel safe and that they are being listened to. At Giles Junior school, we encourage a climate in which the children themselves actively discourage bullying and view reporting incidents of bullying as being responsible rather than 'telling tales'. Should any bullying take place, in the first instance it should be reported immediately to the class teacher by staff, children or parents. The report will be listened to, taken seriously and appropriate enquiries made. The outcome of those enquiries will be made known to all those involved.

What is bullying?

In Giles Junior School we define bullying as follows:

- Bullying is when an individual or group deliberately hurts another or makes them feel unhappy.
- Bullying behaviour will be repeated over a period of time and is difficult for the victim to defend against
- Bullying may be racist, sexist, or homophobic.

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

- Physical – pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting, demanding money or belongings.
- Verbal – name calling, taunting, teasing, mocking, threatening, insults, making racist, sexist, homophobic or offensive remarks, gossiping and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- Indirect – excluding or ‘blanking’, hurtful looks, spreading gossip, damaging property, offensive or abusive emails, text messages or posts on websites – known as ‘cyber bullying’. We believe that bullying someone by email or text messages is still hurtful and will be dealt with in the same manner.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is deemed to be bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP) or as an isolated incident of persistent, enforced opinions or actions which over-ride the opinions of another person. This does not include occasional fighting or falling out between friends or equals, though single incidences of verbal or physical attack, and behaviour which is hurtful but not intentional are also taken seriously and dealt with by the school. It should be noted that not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all reported hurtful behaviour should be taken seriously and resolved at the earliest opportunity.

Signs and Symptoms of bullying:

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- low self esteem
- begins to self-harm
- lack assertiveness
- lack communication and social skills to cope sensitively
- begins truanting.
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- feels ill in the morning.
- begins to under-perform in school work.
- has possessions go ‘missing’.
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully).

- is frightened to say what's wrong

Note: this is not a definitive list but suggests some of the signs and symptoms.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

Bullies might have:

- low self-esteem
- lack communication and social skills for sensitive expression
- lack empathy
- lack insight into effects of their own behaviour
- lack remorse

What can you do if you are being bullied?

We want everybody to feel confident to report bullying whenever and wherever it happens, and get the help they need to feel safe again. It is important to remember that there are people who can help. Children should be encouraged to tell someone they trust, giving them as many facts as possible (Who? Where? What? Why? When? How?). All pupils know that if they are experiencing bullying they should tell their teacher in the first instance. Should a pupil not feel confident in doing this, they may talk to any adult within the school or they may choose to use the school council representatives.

What can you do if you see someone else being bullied? (The role of the bystander)

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair on the victim. By keeping silent, the bully/bullies gain a position of power and the opportunity to continue with the bullying behaviour. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger, for example tell a member of staff as soon as possible or ask someone you trust about what to do.

Strategies in school for the prevention and reduction of bullying:

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules.
- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year.
- Raising awareness through assemblies, work in PSHE lessons and circle time discussions.
- Setting up circle of friends support network to support individuals experiencing difficulties.
- Using assemblies, drama and role-play activities to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations.
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives
- Training year 5 & 6 pupils to be Peer Mediators
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Involving parents and the wider community.

- Multi agency work – working with social services, police etc.

In addition, staff need to feel safe in order to help make the children feel safe. Staff are aware of procedures described in the Harassment and Bullying, Grievance and Whistleblowing policies to follow in such an instance or they can contact their union for advice and support.

Role of the School

Staff

- School staff must act – and importantly be seen to act – firmly against bullying wherever and whenever it appears. They must take action as quickly as possible.
- All members of the school community need to understand what constitutes bullying and be alert to signs that bullying is taking place.
- The school should ensure that its response to bullying is clearly understood by all members of the school community and everyone should be clear about their role and responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying.
- Facts must be established clearly, taking separate accounts from victims, bullies and witnesses and then recorded appropriately.
- Children affected by bullying must be offered comfort, support, advice and concrete help. Reassure children but don't make them feel inadequate or foolish.
- Playgrounds are areas where bullying is most likely to occur. Pupils report name calling to be more distressing than physical assault. Name-calling is used in the initial stages of bullying to test out the response of the supposedly vulnerable. Good supervision at this stage prevents escalation into crisis and can prevent disputes carrying over into classroom disruption.

Pupils

It is important that pupils should:

- Learn about what constitutes bullying and what to do about it
- Have opportunities to develop the skills to resist bullying and to deal with bullying.
- To be aware that knowing about bullying by or to others and doing nothing is unacceptable - children affected by bullying and witnesses of bullying should know that it is 'OK to tell' and that they will receive practical help if they so do.
- Understand that things CAN be done to stop bullying and that this not only affects the bully or child being bullied, but everybody's behaviour.

Parents

Parents, carers and families have an important role to play in helping the school deal with bullying. They should:

- Discourage their children from bullying behaviour at school, at home or elsewhere
- Take an active interest in their children's school life, discuss friendships, how playtime is spent and the journey to and from school
- Watch out for signs that their children are being bullied, or are bullying others

- Contact the school at the first sign if they are worried that their children are being bullied or are bullying others.

Governing Body

The Governing Body will be updated on a termly basis of behaviour, racist and bullying incidents via the Headteacher's safeguarding report.

The Governors will be responsible for annually evaluating the effectiveness of the Anti Bullying policy.

- This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who will report to Governors about the effectiveness of the policy
- This Anti-Bullying Policy is the Governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the number of logged bullying incidents and through discussion with the Headteacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents
- The School Council send a questionnaire annually to the children asking for their views on their safety in school which gives them the opportunity to discuss any bullying issues and how the school deals with this
- Parents/guardians are asked how safe their children feel in school by completing questionnaires at Parent-Teacher meetings
- As a school we support Anti-Bullying Week in November, which culminates in a series of lessons about bullying.
- With the increase of Internet usage we are aware of the greater influence of cyber bullying and provide e-safety talks to parents and children (see e-Safety Policy)

Procedure for Dealing with Bullying Incidents:

- Each class teacher will clarify and agree classroom rules and consequences based on rights, responsibilities and 7Habits as specified in the Behaviour and Pupil Discipline Policy, at the beginning of each academic year.
- Staff will work together to actively promote and 'model' positive behaviour, attitudes and values.
- School assemblies will focus on positive behaviour and heightening awareness of rights, responsibilities and rules as well as bullying and its consequences.
- Teachers will talk with their classes about bullying and what they should do as an individual if they are bullied, or witness, or are aware of any bullying.
- Teachers must report signs of bullying to the Headteacher or the Deputy or Assistant Headteachers.
- If an incident of bullying is reported, both the child affected and the bully as well as any witnesses will be talked with individually by a teacher, the Assistant/Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher.

- The SLT (Senior Leadership Team) will carry out a fair and professional investigation into alleged bullying incidents by establishing the facts and recording the incident, actions taken and consequences on CPOMS.
- The bully will be made aware of the seriousness and effect of his/her actions. It will be made clear to them that they are bullying, that their behaviour is unacceptable and that it will not be tolerated. The bully will incur consequences as a result of the behaviour but may also be offered support and counselling to adjust their behaviour.
- The child affected by the bullying will be offered support, guidance and comfort and taught skills to cope with the bully.
- When 'punishing' the bully, the school's Behaviour and Pupil Discipline policy should be referenced and appropriate consequences given.
- If the bullying behaviour is repeated, the bully's parents (if the bully is a pupil) will be informed and talked with by the Assistant/Deputy Headteachers or the Head Teacher. The bully will be talked with again and further consequences implemented. The bully's behaviour will be monitored and a log kept on CPOMS.
- If the bullying still continues, appropriate consequences could include:
 - exclusion from the classroom
 - exclusion from the playground
 - exclusion from school or school premises

It should be noted that investigations may reveal conflicting stories that cannot always be resolved.

If the issue is serious, or is one of a number of similar incidents, the Headteacher will inform both sets of parents and work with them and the children involved to resolve the issue.

Date for review

July 2022

Distribution:-

A copy of this policy will be available to:-

- a) all school governors
- b) all staff
- c) all Parents

Approved:

Date: **29 September 2021**