

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(This Policy is also applicable to the EYFS)



Policy updated: May 2011

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(This policy has regard for the DFE Guidance on the prevention of bullying contained in "Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying in schools".)

This policy is provided for and made available to parents, pupils and staff.

STATEMENT ON BULLYING

Moorfield School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, the pupil(s) involved should feel able to talk about what has happened and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils who witness incidents of bullying are expected to tell a member of staff who will then take the appropriate action.

THE EFFECT OF BULLYING

Bullying affects everyone, not just the victim and the bullies. It affects the children who may witness it and may be drawn into it. It damages the atmosphere in the class.

Bullying may take many forms, and what one child perceives as teasing may be to another bullying. Any behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts or threatens to hurt another individual or group may be construed as bullying. Bullying can cause long lasting psychological damage to a victim. All complaints must be taken seriously and pursued. Acting against bullying is a part of every teacher's duty of care to pupils.

Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, punching or using any violence; and hiding, taking or damaging belongings.

Verbal – name calling, teasing, mockery, insults, constantly putting a person 'down'. It is important to consider the effects that name calling has upon the victim, rather than simply the actual words used which may seem to others harmless.

Emotional – being deliberately unfriendly, excluding someone from a group, tormenting, spreading rumours, inciting others to do the same.

Racist – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity. This includes taunts and graffiti.

Religious/cultural – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of religious belief or other cultural issues.

Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.

Homophobic – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Disability – focusing on differences in physical or mental ability.

Cyber bullying – all areas of the internet, such as email, internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera and video facilities.

AIMS

At Moorfield, we foster an environment where independence is respected and individuals may flourish without fear. Every pupil has the right to be safe and happy at school, and to be protected when she is feeling vulnerable. Safeguarding the welfare of our pupils is a priority. (See Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy)

As members of staff at Moorfield we must:

- Encourage a responsibility in children for their own safety.
- Model the behaviour that we want to see from our pupils through treating everyone in our school community with respect and courtesy.
- Develop an atmosphere of trust, in which there is a listening and supportive adult and time to talk.
- Be vigilant in monitoring and supervising children.
- Make use of opportunities during the school week such as PSHE, Circle Time and Form time, assemblies, drama, stories, literature, historical events and current affairs, to educate our pupils about the nature and consequences of bullying and what each pupil can do as an individual to stop it from taking place.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

The following list is designed to raise awareness of signs to look out for. It is not an exhaustive list.

- Children who are suffering as victims of bullying may show changes in behaviour, such as shyness and nervousness, feign illness and/ or be reluctant to come to school.
- They may show changes in their work or sleep patterns.
- They may lose their appetite.
- They may continually feel ill in the morning.
- They may cry themselves to sleep at night or have nightmares.
- They may begin stammering.
- They may appear despondent, listless or unhappy.
- They may become easily upset or irritable.
- They may have physical signs such as scratches, bruises, missing or ripped clothing.
- They may complain that their belongings keep going missing.
- Other pupils are observed to be sniggering or nudging one another when a pupil enters the room or answers a question.
- The bullied person may spend a lot of time alone or find themselves left out of activities; it may get to the point where she is reluctant to take part in the first place.
- They may be frightened to say what is wrong.
- They may give improbable excuses for any of the above.

The 'Bystander Culture' versus 'Encouragement to Tell'.

As a School, we believe that it is unacceptable for any pupil to watch bullying taking place and do nothing about it.

We encourage all pupils to bring their concerns to the attention of a member of staff and/or their parents.

We create an atmosphere in which pupils who may be bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that the action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns. Pupils need to know that not reporting an incident of bullying has the effect of protecting the bullies, and gives them the message that they can continue to act in this way.

Parents who are concerned that a child (their own daughter, or another pupil) may be being bullied should approach their daughter's Form Teacher, or alternatively the Headmistress or Deputy Head.

PREVENTION

In order to prevent a culture of bullying, pupils are given many opportunities to talk about their concerns and receive guidance on how to deal with bullying. The following preventative measures are in place at Moorfield:

- Training of staff ensures that they remain fully aware of how to deal with bullying.
- The whole school PSHE programme allows for discussion, writing about and drawing issues of bullying in all forms.
- Emphasis is placed on self-esteem and friendship skills, assertiveness and handling conflict.
- Pupils are encouraged in Circle Time and assemblies to learn to appreciate ways to behave and respect people from all cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds.
- Pupils are reminded of the expected code of conduct.
- Be aware and vigilant. If possible, staff should aim to uncover the bullying as this protects victims from further risk. Staff must take action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely.
- Provide a worry box where children can anonymously post concerns and request to talk to any member of staff they name.
- All members of staff should be aware that their own conduct is influential and that they should avoid actions and statements which may imply support for the victimisation or humiliation of individuals.
- Action will be taken by staff to reduce the risk of bullying in places where it is most likely (e.g. at play times).
- Staff awareness of sensitive friendships/potential bullying will be raised at staff meetings.
- Pupil prevention techniques that are taught:
 - Ignore the bully, pretend not to hear
 - Walk away quickly; use body language to look determined, strong and positive, even if you feel frightened inside
 - Always tell a trusted adult if you are bullied.

PROCEDURE IF A CHILD REPORTS ALLEGED BULLYING TO A MEMBER OF STAFF

1. The member of staff investigates by questioning the child in a sympathetic way. A written record of the incidents leading up to the report of bullying should be compiled by the member of staff.
2. The member of staff informs the Headmistress of the child reporting the incident, and gives her a copy of the written notes from the meeting.
3. The Headmistress interviews all the children involved in an open and sympathetic way, but in private. Both bullied and bully must be heard and helped. Written notes (including the date and time of the interviews) will be taken during such meetings and copies kept on the files of the children involved for future reference.
4. The Headmistress will try to resolve the conflict in a reasonable and sympathetic way and seek to ensure that the future conduct of the alleged bully (and possibly the victim) does not cause future conflict between them.
5. Parents of all parties will be informed of what has happened and told of any action taken.
6. If the bullying continues, it will become a disciplinary matter and sanctions will be followed.
7. In repeated cases of bullying, the final sanction is for the Headmistress to exclude the bully from School.

Guidelines for interviewing

The member of staff should choose a place which is quiet with no interruptions.

The interview should be non-confrontational. The main theme is that there is a problem to be solved.

There should be a mutual agreement that the pupil being bullied is unhappy and everyone should try to improve the situation.

It is not possible to promise that everything the child says can be kept confidential – any action taken will necessarily involve others. However, any girl who is prepared to tell a teacher that she feels she is being bullied must be offered support and protection.

The victim of bullying must understand that revenge is never the correct response, and that to confront the alleged bully constructively is more likely to achieve change.

During the interview with the bully, they will be asked why they have behaved that way. They will be carefully listened to. They will understand the hurt and distress they have caused and be warned of the consequences should it ever happen again. Parents will be informed of the interview, if appropriate.

<i>Drafted by:</i>	<i>The Headmistress</i>
<i>Date:</i>	<i>May 2010</i>
<i>Reviewed by SMT:</i>	<i>May 2010</i>
<i>Approved by Governors:</i>	<i>June 2010</i>
<i>Reviewed by Head:</i>	<i>May 2011, no changes</i>
<i>The review to be initiated by:</i>	<i>The Headmistress</i>
<i>Next Review Date:</i>	<i>May 2012</i>

Bullying – Advice to Pupils and Parents

Information For Pupils

If you are being bullied

- *try to stay calm* and look as confident as you can.
- *be firm and clear* - look them in the eye and tell them to stop.
- *get away* from the situation as quickly as possible.
- *tell an adult* what has happened straight away.

After you have been bullied

- *tell a teacher or another adult* in your school.
- *tell your family*.
- *if you are scared* to tell an adult by yourself, ask a friend to come with you.
- *keep speaking up* until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying.
- *don't blame yourself* for what has happened.

When you are talking to an adult about bullying, be clear about

- *what* has happened to you.
- *how often* it has happened.
- *who* was involved.
- *who saw* what was happening.
- *where* it happened.
- *what* you have done about it already.

If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school or at home, ring **ChildLine**, Freephone 0800 1111, or write, Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR. The phone call or letter is **free**. It is **confidential** helpline.

Information for parents and families

Every school is likely to have some problem with bullying at one time or another. Your child's school must by law have an anti-bullying policy, and use it to reduce and prevent bullying, as many schools have already successfully done.

Bullying behaviour includes:

- name calling and nasty teasing.
- threats and extortion.
- physical violence.
- damage to belongings.
- leaving pupils out of social activities deliberately and frequently.
- spreading malicious rumours.

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping schools deal with bullying.

First, discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

Second, ask to see the school's anti-bullying policy. Each school must have an anti-bullying policy, which sets out how it deals with incidents of bullying. You have a right to know about this policy which is as much for parents as for staff and pupils.

Third, watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect symptoms of bullying, though sometimes school nurses or doctors may first suspect that a child has been bullied. Common symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. It can be helpful to ask questions about progress and friends at school; how break times and lunchtimes are spent; and whether your child is facing problems or difficulties at school. Don't dismiss negative signs. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

If your child has been bullied:

- *calmly talk* to your child about it.
- *make a note* of what your child says - particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.
- *reassure your child* that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do.
- explain that *any further incidents* should be reported to a teacher immediately.
- *make an appointment* to see your child's class teacher or form tutor.
- *explain to the teacher* the problems your child is experiencing.

Talking to teachers about bullying

- *try and stay calm* - bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- *be as specific as possible* about what your child says has happened - give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- *make a note* of what action the school intends to take.
- *ask if there is anything you can do* to help your child or the school.
- *stay in touch with the school* - let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If you think your concerns are not being addressed:

- *check the school anti-bullying policy* to see if agreed procedures are being followed.
- *discuss your concerns* with a governor.
- *make an appointment* to meet the Headmistress, keeping a record of the meeting.
- if this does not help, *write to the Chair of Governors* explaining your concerns and what you would like to see happen.
- *contact local or national parent support groups* for advice.
- *contact the Parentline Plus helpline* for support and information at any of these stages
- in the last resort, *write to the Secretary of State for Education*.

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.

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 or form tutor; explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing; discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop them bullying others.
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are cooperative or kind to other people.

Resources for parents and families about bullying:

ALEXANDER, J. **Your child bullying: Practical and easy to follow advice.**

Element Books, 1998.

ELLIOTT, M. **101 Ways to deal with bullying - A guide for parents.**

Hodder and Stoughton, 1997.

KIDSCAPE. **Keeping safe: A practical guide to talking with children.**

Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W ODH, 1990.

LAWSON, S. **Helping children cope with bullying.**

Sheldon Press, 1994.

LINDENFIELD, G. **Confident children: A parents' guide to helping children feel good.**

Thorsens, 1994.

MELLOR A. **Bullying and how to fight it: A guide for families.**

Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1 5 St John Street, Edinburgh EH5 5JR, 1993.

PEARCE J. **Fighting, teasing and bullying: Simple and effective ways to help your child.**

Wellingborough: Thorsons, 1989.

TRAIN, A. **The bullying problem: How to deal with difficult children.**

Condor Book, Souvenir Press, 1995.

Organisations who can help:

Advisory Centre for Education, IC Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2DQ.

Tel: 0207 704 9822 Tel helpline: 0207 354 8321 (Mon-Fri 2-5 pm).

Advice line for parents on all matters concerning schools

Anti Bullying Campaign, 185 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2UF.

Tel: 0207 378 1446 (9.30 am - 5.00 pm).

Advice line for parents and children.

Children's Legal Centre, Tel: 01206 873 820

(Mon-Fri 10 am - 12.30 pm and 2 pm - 4.30 pm).

Publications and free advice line on legal issues.

Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH.

Tel: 0207 730 3300 Fax: 0207 730 7081

Has a wide range of publications for young people, parents and teachers. Bullying counsellor available Monday to Friday, 10-4.

Parentline Plus, 520 Highgate Studios, 53-79 Highgate Road, Kentish Town,
London NW5 1TL.

Tel: 0808 800 2222.

National helpline for parents (Mon-Fri 9-9; Sat 9.30-5; Sun 10-3).