

Roaches Farm School Network

Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

Research shows that having a policy helps to combat bullying if:

- Everyone knows what the policy is
- The policy is applied consistently everyone believes in the policy.
- What are the AIMS of the policy?
- Prevention of bullying
- Dealing with bullying when it occurs
- Building on the school discipline policy fitting in with social education policy.

What does the policy consist of?

- Raising awareness through the curriculum
- Giving pupils opportunities to talk about bullying in general
- Supervision of key areas of the school
- Procedures for investigating incidents
- Guidelines for listening to victims, witnesses and bullies.

BULLYING IS NOT ACCEPTABLE IN OUR SCHOOL

It is a basic entitlement of all children and young people in the United Kingdom that they receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. Education is compulsory in our society; it is the responsibility of all to ensure that it takes place in an atmosphere that is caring and protective. Every pupil at The Roaches Farm Schools Network has the right to enjoy his / her learning and leisure free from intimidation.

WE HAVE ARRIVED AT THE FOLLOWING DEFINITION:

What is Bullying?

- Bullying can be described as the systematic abuse of power
 - Deliberately hurtful
 - Repeated and often over a period of time
 - Difficult for victims to defend themselves
 - Physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings
 - Verbal - name calling, insults, racist, sexist or homophobic comments
 - Indirect - spreading nasty stories and rumours, excluding and isolating, gestures and signs, sending malicious e-mails or text messages, threatening others to act in a particular way
- Some children are more vulnerable to bullying, such as children with learning difficulties and children who are "different"

Guidelines for Staff

Why it Matters:-

- Even one incident of bullying is one too many. One does not need to have been a victim to know this.
- Bullying in one form or another is prevalent in all schools. Sometimes it takes the form of physical threats or attacks; sometimes it can be a kind of emotional blackmail.
- Bullying in school is closely connected with subsequent unacceptable behaviour.
- Children complain that staff are not interested when they are victims. If we can do something about bullying it helps us organise classrooms and schools.
- This issue can be at the centre of a policy of good social behaviour in schools.

The Difficulties

- It is only recently that attention has been paid to bullying. Staff are therefore not necessarily taught to look out for it or prevent it.
- There can be a tendency to assume that there will always be bullying.
- There are many opportunities for bullying in and outside school.
- It is sometimes difficult to notice bullying as it takes place in obscure places outside the classroom. Bullying takes place out of schools.
- Some schools do not like to admit the existence of bullying, as if they would be blamed for it. It is not schools' fault. Recognising the existence of bullying is the first stage in helping to deal with it.

The Principles that Help Staff

We need to remember:-

- Bullying is a form, even in an extreme distorted form, of children learning how to pattern their behaviour in society.
- Bullying includes bystanders as well as victims and the bullies themselves.
- Bullies are often those who most disrupt lessons for others as well as themselves.
- Learning involves motivation, interest and curiosity; all the emotional attitudes that can be undermined by the tensions of bullying.

What can we do about it?

In the School:-

The success of the school depends:

- on how staff work together
- on shared principles of the policy
- on sharing knowledge of the Curriculum

A shared policy on dealing with behaviour has many advantages. It gives staff a chance to:-

- Collaborate
- Be consistent
- Encourage parents to support and understand the school.
- In the classroom / In the home
- Create a positive ethos, an expectation of good behaviour from all
- Notice all that takes place outside the classroom as well as inside it
- Show an interest in all the children (even those who try to remain invisible)
- Do not allow children to enjoy being curious onlookers of other children's difficulties
- Vary the ways in which children are grouped so that they can understand consistent patterns of collaboration
- Make all children work together in pairs or groups. Use them to teach each other and to learn
- Be fair and seen to be so
- Insist on children telling the truth. (It's so easy not to have time chasing up details)
- Praise good behaviour when possible rather than just telling them off for bad behaviour
- Have a very clear classroom / house routine
- Find a means of getting children to help manage the classroom / home.
- Talk to children about behaviour. Don't be afraid to tackle the essential purposes of the Curriculum.
- Procedures immediate

Action Following a Bullying Incident:

- Remain calm
- Take the incident seriously and make it clear bullying is not acceptable.
- Take time to make the situation safe, if necessary, i.e. remove the victim immediately and offer support; control the bully and tell them they will be dealt with later. Call on Senior Staff to assist if needed.
- Depending on seriousness of incident, take time to write a full account of the incident. Give this report to the Headteacher / Care Manager as soon as possible, preferably the same day.
- Sanction the bully if necessary and explain why (failure to earn points, stars, bonuses etc.). Bullies **must not** be sanctioned in a way that involves anger, aggression or humiliation. The bully should be encouraged to make amends in the following ways:-
 - Public apology
 - Private apology (face to face)
 - Apology in writing
 - A gift or special favour for the victim.

Conciliation between those involved is essential.

Opportunities should be taken to look for positive achievements in bullies and victims, e.g. give constructive tasks to the bully. Interview victim and bully separately.

Consider opportunities to discuss the incident / issues at a "Handover Meeting" and/or "Childrens House Meeting". Bring together bully and victim later, initially in private, where victim retells story with support (do this only with victim's agreement). This makes it clear to the bully that victims will no longer remain silent and encourages the bully to see the victim's point of view. Make it clear to the bully that the behaviour is unacceptable, and that further incidents will be looked at very seriously.

Advice to Parents / Carers

- No child deserves to be bullied.
- Bullies too have a miserable future in front of them.
- One study found that bullies were much more likely, as adults, to be violent, to have committed crimes, to have battered their children and to have difficulties with relationships than children who are not bullies.
- We do bullies no favours by ignoring their behaviours.
- If you are worried about your child being bullied ask him directly.
- Take bullying seriously and find out the facts when told about an incident of bullying.
- **DON'T** agree to keep the bullying a secret. Give your child a chance to vent his or her feelings about being bullied.
- Take an active interest in your child's social life. Discuss friendships, how recreation time is spent and trips out of school.
- **If you think** your child is being bullied, inform the school and ask to speak to your child's key-worker. Devise strategies that will help your child and will provide support inside and outside school time.
- Do not encourage your child to hit back. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to your child's routine. More positively, encourage your child to make friends. A child who has friends is less likely to be bullied.
- **If you know** your child is being bullied advise him/her not to hesitate to tell an adult. Advise them not to try and buy the bully off with sweets or other 'presents', and not to give in to demands for money. Together identify those places where the bullying takes place and work out ways of avoiding them. If this is not possible someone in authority should be told.

Messages We Should Give To Children

IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED:-

- Try not to show you are upset (this is difficult)
- Tell the person to **'STOP IT, I DON'T LIKE IT'**
- Walk away quickly and confidently (you are probably very frightened inside, don't show it)
- Get your friends together and say **'NO'** to the bully
- If you are in danger, your safety comes first. **GET AWAY**
- If you are bullied tell yourself **IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT**
- Tell an adult e.g. Your Key Worker, Teacher, Headteacher, Care staff, Your Social Worker, Your parents/ carers, Your friends.
- If an adult does not listen, **BE PERSISTENT AND TELL SOMEONE ELSE.**
- **If you see bullying happening — YOU CAN HELP:**

- Don't stand by and watch, get help.
- Show you and your friends disapprove, say something, e.g. **STOP IT, YOU ARE UPSETTING HIM/HER.**
- Show the victim of the bullying that you care.
- Be careful what you say or do to others, imagine how **YOU** might feel.
- If you see bullying tell an adult. It is not telling tales. The victim may be too scared or lonely to tell.
- Whole school approaches
- The school will provide consistent approaches underpinned by school values such as:
- respect; tolerance; cooperation and care.
- The school will promote the policy to all the school community such as parents/carers through outreach work and daily communication.
- Staff will model good practice showing respect, empathy and sincerity.
- The school will display posters and charts in the school showing help line numbers and support for individual pupils.
- The school will provide ease of access to the school pastoral system and external confidential services
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This policy was agreed and adopted in December 2013.

To be reviewed annually - Reviewed July 2021