



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

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February 2022

Purpose

*Bullying and unkindness is wrong and damages individual pupils. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a **school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.***

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to prevent bullying from happening between children at Claregate Primary School
- to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
- to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

Definition

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

At Claregate Primary School we use the mnemonic S.T.O.P to remind us that bullying is Several Times On Purpose. Bullying can take many different forms.

Type of bullying	Example of what bullying is.	Examples of what bullying is not.
Emotional	Being deliberately and repeatedly unkind.	One off spats or unintentional clumsy use of language.
Physical	Repeated and targeted hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings or any use of violence.	Accidents without malicious intent. One off spur of the moment loss of temper. Non targeted lack of control.
Racial	Intentional racial taunts or insults, graffiti or gestures intended to cause offence.	Comments because of lack of knowledge of correct terminology. Words that the child did not know are offensive.
Sexual	Deliberately explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching.	Behaviour learned from external sources (older siblings or television) that is experimental or innocent.

Direct or indirect verbal	Repeated and targeted name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing.	One off incidents. One off attempts at humour that go wrong without malice. Where the child genuinely did not know what they were saying had certain meanings.
Cyber bullying and sending inappropriate images	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites.	As above.

Labels

At Claregate Primary School we avoid labelling individual children and describe situations as “a bullying incident”.

Victim: the term victim is problematic – it can mean different things to different people. Because of this, we use the term “target of bullying.”

Bully: The term bully is problematic – it implies focus on the child’s self, rather than the behaviour he or she is displaying. Because of this, we use the term ‘child who is displaying bullying behaviour.’

At Claregate Primary School we believe that the emotional damage caused to those who are targeted by bullying, as well as those displaying bullying behaviour themselves, can be extensive and long lasting. It is therefore our aim to create a safe environment for all, where we all respect each other and are tolerant of each other’s differences.

Principles

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and operate in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- bullying causes real distress and affects a person’s health and development
- in some instances, bullying can cause significant harm
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

- developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within and outside of our activities
- holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and sexual bullying
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place.

Our regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families will focus on:

- group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
- practising skills such as listening to each other
- respecting the fact that we are all different
- making sure that no one is without friends
- dealing with problems in a positive way
- checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well.

Responding to bullying

We will make sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:

- the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
- the needs of the person being bullied
- needs of any bystanders
- our school as a whole.

We will review the plan we have developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

Diversity and inclusion

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity.

We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference
- increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people
- welcoming new members to our organisation.

Principles

We will take a thorough individual and systematic approach to reducing bullying and deal with problems that occur. The end result should be that all pupils feel valued and respected at school.

- Pupils have a right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from intimidation and fear.
- The welfare/well-being needs of all children and young people are paramount and pupils' needs (whether bully or targeted pupil) need to be separated from their behaviour.
- When bullying concerns are identified our school will work in a restorative and solution focused way to achieve the necessary change.
- Pupils who are targeted will be listened to and supported.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be listened to and encouraged to accept responsibility and change their behaviour.
- Where a concern arises, staff will receive ongoing support from Senior Managers with Pastoral responsibility. Training will be provided for staff on how to deal with bullying incidents.
- Parents will be made aware of our school's practice to prevent and to respond to concerns through parent information meetings, consultation processes and where necessary, their active participation in partnership with the school to resolve concerns involving their child.

Responsibilities

The governing board will

- Review and approve the anti-bullying and Positive Behaviour Policies
- Monitor the policy's effectiveness, holding the headteacher to account for its implementation and may delegate this to a sub-committee.
- Challenge school leadership to ensure that behaviour is outstanding.
- Monitor incidents of poor behaviour and bullying that occur and review the effectiveness of school policy each term via data and a report submitted by the Headteacher.

The headteacher will

- Set the school climate in response to the ethos of the school.
 - **Review this policy in conjunction with the Governing Board, giving due consideration to the school's statement of behaviour principles (appendix 1). The headteacher will also approve this policy.**
 - Ensure that systems are followed and that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with incidents of bullying,
 - Monitor how staff implement this policy consistently
 - Hold pupils and staff to account regarding behaviour
 - Ensuring that staff training is effective
- N.B. Only the headteacher can exclude a pupil.

Claregate staff will:

- Foster self- esteem, self- respect and respect for others through how we treat children and each other.
- Actively teaching about bullying and how to manage relationships with others through PSHE and RSE lessons.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of professional and social behaviour we expect of our pupils
- Discuss bullying with our classes so pupils learn about the damage it causes and the importance of telling the teacher
- Be alert to the signs of bullying
- Respond to any bullying incident

Pupils should:

- Report all incidents of bullying (if a child is being bullied or is another pupil is being bullied, STOP = Start Telling Other People
- Follow the school's golden rules.
- Avoid inappropriate behaviour which might be considered as bullying.
- Be respectful and supportive to others.

Parents should:

- Work in partnership with the school.
- Advise their children to report any concerns to a member of staff.
- Discourage behaviours which might be considered as bullying.
- Stress to their children that retaliation is not helpful.
- Contact the School to arrange an appointment with the child's class teacher to discuss concerns.
- Co-operate with the school, if their child/children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
- Accept their role in dealing with bullying behaviours which occur outside the school so that they do not interfere with effective learning and teaching during the school day.

Responding to a bullying concern

- **Be calm.** It is important to be clear thinking and emotionally in control. - Be positive. Have in mind the importance of maintaining a positive relationship with the pupil. A pupil is much more likely to modify his/her behaviour if he/she perceives that a teacher cares.
- **Be assertive.** Staff should directly and clearly express their thoughts, feelings and expectations concerning the need for the pupil to not only stop bullying, but also make restitution with the child who has been bullied.
- **Be Confident.** It is important to trust that you will be successful in implementing practices that can have on the pupil's future behaviour.

It is always helpful to focus on the behaviour, not the pupil.

- Ensure that the specific behaviour is in fact bullying behaviour as in policy (Several Times On Purpose)
- Assess the situation and its severity level.
- Determine the appropriate level of response required to manage the situation effectively.
- Once the Incident Level has been determined, select one or more responses from Appendix

To determine the level of severity, staff should take account of the following:

- The nature of the bullying behaviour- for example teasing, excluding or hitting. There is a tendency to rate some bullying particularly violence as more serious than others. This can be a dangerous mistake and leave us vulnerable to ignoring 'teasing or exclusion'.
- The frequency of the bullying
- The duration of the bullying behaviour
- The perceptions of the child being bullied – the seriousness of bullying can only be measured by the degree of distress suffered by the target.

Once an alleged bullying incident has occurred the Inclusion Leader/Deputy Headteacher will:

1. Gather and clarify the facts.
2. Check that the behaviour constitutes bullying as defined by school (Several Times On Purpose). Ensure previous records have been checked.
3. Record incident on MyConcern and share with phase leader.
4. On the basis of this initial assessment, choose appropriate intervention from intervention levels (Appendix 1)
5. Ensure effective communication between all parties involved and ensure parents are kept informed of progress.
6. Consider the possible need for: - Parental involvement - Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO) involvement - Risk Assessment - External agency involvement e.g. Child Protection.
7. Refer to the support materials provided on the intervention selected (Appendix 1)
8. Monitor and evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of chosen intervention.
9. Record actions taken and outcomes achieved on MyConcern.
10. Review the outcomes to determine whether further action is required and progress accordingly.

Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers

Bullying concerns are reported to schools often by parents/carers. Such reports should be met openly and sympathetically. When a parent/carer contacts the school to report a bullying concern, staff should consider the following:

- Effective communication between school and home is essential to ensure that any bullying concerns are resolved as quickly and effectively as possible.

- Remember that this can be an upsetting and stressful experience for the parent/carers of all the pupils involved.
- Remain understanding if the parent/carer expresses anger directed at the school. Try to get clear facts from the parent/carer but do not cross-examine or emphasise inconsistencies in their version of events.
- Ensure that you have already gathered as much reliable information as possible and apply the full criteria to be clear whether the behaviour does or does not meet the school's definition of bullying and the school's policy statement.
- Ensure that the parents/carers understand how their child's behaviour does or does not conform to the legal definition of bullying.
- Share your concern about what has been happening to the child experiencing bullying.
- Avoid suggesting character of their child is at fault. Emphasise that it is aspects of their child's behaviour that must change. Refer to their child's positive qualities.
- Make it clear that you care and will do what you can and will act in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Tell the parent/carer that you will need time (be specific) to gather information and that you will keep them informed.
- Remind parents/carers that the only information that can be shared with them is information regarding their own child. No information regarding action taken in relation to another child can be shared with any other parent/carer.

Choosing an Appropriate Intervention

There is no one preferable intervention. The main aim of any intervention is to RESPOND to the bullying that is taking place, RESOLVE the concern and RESTORE the wellbeing of all those involved.

In selecting an intervention schools should take account of:

- The level of severity
- The age and ability of those involved
- Whether an individual pupil or is a group involved
- The level of staff agreement, confidence and competence in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach.
- The agreement of parents/carers.
- Whether the pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour acknowledge(s) the unacceptable behaviour and can be enabled to feel empathy for the pupil experiencing bullying, and act appropriately.
- The willingness to engage in a group intervention method.
- Whether it is realistic to expect that the child experiencing bullying can be strengthened adequately to deal with the situation.

Dealing with Relationship Issues

Staff deal with concerns relating to fallouts and friendship issues on a regular basis. Such incidents are often temporary and, when challenged in a timely manner, are relatively straightforward to resolve. Many of the interventions discussed in Level 1 (Appendix 1) can be used in such instances.

Establishing and maintaining positive teacher-pupil and pupil–pupil relationships creates a safe and secure nurturing environment in which staff and pupils feel valued and supported. By effectively supporting young people to understand the need for respectful behaviour towards their peers, school staff continually promote a restorative, anti-bullying culture within the school and the wider community.

It is important to foster the development of strong, supportive mutually respectful peer relationships and friendships within the school, however we must be clear that pupils will not be friends with everyone they meet. The focus must be on displaying respectful ‘friendly behaviour’ as opposed to ‘being friends’.

Closure of a bullying situation

It is difficult to identify when it is appropriate to close the case on a bullying situation. This is usually where everyone involved is satisfied that the situation has been appropriately resolved. Staff involved should gather to reflect on the incident(s), the interventions, the effectiveness of those interventions and the current relationship between the young people involved.

Those leading on the bullying situation should make sure their judgement to close the case is based on all evidence available. This decision should be reached in conjunction with the young people involved, their parents/carers and any other relevant agencies involved. Once resolved the record of the incidents(s), interventions and effectiveness of those interventions should be maintained and recorded on MyConcern. Should any further incidents occur at any point in the future, a check of records would show the history of the relationship between the pupils involved, providing valuable information for the planning and implementation of any future intervention. Where a case is deemed ongoing, further interventions should be considered and implemented.

Following the resolution of a bullying situation, it is essential that school staff identify and address any specific Professional Learning needs arising e.g., staff training, including both targeted development for individual staff and whole school training provision for all members of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff. Reflections on a bullying situation, and on the response to that situation, may indicate the need for institutional and cultural development within the school. For example, an incident may highlight a disconnect between the stated ethos of the school and the practice of members of the school community, including staff, pupils and parents/carers.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in the UK. NSPCC Learning provides summaries of the key legislation and guidance on:

- bullying and cyberbullying
- online abuse
- child protection in each nation of the UK.

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures including:

- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Managing allegations policy
- Code of conduct
- Online safety policy
- Equality, diversity and inclusion policies

Appendix 1

Understanding the levels of Intervention

Level 1 Interventions Low Level Bullying Behaviour

Interventions at this level are to help individuals to recognise/reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and to 'get them back on track' while listening to and supporting/strengthening the pupil(s) experiencing bullying. Never ignore low level bullying behaviour.

Staff should:

- Explain the inappropriateness of the behaviour to the child displaying bullying behaviour.
- Identify possible consequences for the child displaying bullying behaviour if the behaviour continues.
- Point out the level of distress experienced by the child experiencing bullying.
- Talk with the child experiencing bullying to explore whether in any way he/she has provoked the bullying behaviour.
- Help the bullied child to identify ways in which he/she may be strengthened and supported.
- Encourage reparation through restorative conversations if appropriate.
- Monitor the situation carefully.
- Give feedback on actions to parents.
- Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the situation persists or deteriorates.

Level 2 Interventions - Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour

While interventions at Level 2 involve continuing with the above, there is a shift from individual work to group interventions.

To be effective small group work needs:

- The consent of the child being bullied
- To be planned and timetabled, session length dependent on age and ability
- Parental/carer consent and agreement from participating pupils
- Carefully selected group membership
- To be facilitated in a positive manner, ideally by two adults, one participating one observing.
- Structured and focused activities to stimulate discussion and debate amongst members and develop group identity.
- Decisions and outcomes to be agreed and recorded.
- To facilitate the development of empathy amongst pupils.
- A solution focused approach.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility
- Regular meetings of the group
- Regular meetings with the bullied pupil to assess on going effectiveness of agreed actions.

- **Level 3 - Interventions Complex Bullying Behaviour**

It is clear that more complex bullying situations, which may be resistant to change, require the school to collaborate and network with parents/carers and other agencies, in addition to working with individual pupils. Consequently, at this level, regarding a pupil's bullying behaviour require a formal referral to the Inclusion Leader who will assume over-arching responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of school based interventions.

In addition, they will have a lead role when liaising with external agencies. The Inclusion Leader will refer to the school's Positive Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policies to ensure that the response is consistent with the provisions in these policies.

These pupils will require that the SENDCO, in partnership with the Pastoral Coordinator determine appropriate interventions. The inappropriate pupil behaviour should be identified within an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with the intervention detailed in the Behaviour Support Plan.

It is imperative that other school staff implementing discrete interventions have been assigned responsibility accordingly. At this level all available information should be used to inform a Risk Assessment. This assessment should involve an analysis of the presenting Risk Factors and Protective Factors. This risk analysis will determine the level of risk and needs and appropriate intervention from the framework.

We consider these in terms of the following:

- School Environment
- Family Environment
- Peer Environment

This planning may also occur through a Multi-Agency Support Team meeting (MAST).

For vulnerable pupils at higher risk the Inclusion Leader should further liaise with the Parents/Carers, Social Worker and Virtual School as appropriate.

Strength Building

It is clear that pupils who engage in repetitive and/or severe bullying behaviour require additional measures for their behaviour to be influenced. This is especially case for 'at Risk' pupils who present with many risk factors and few protective factors. Research shows that such pupils often have 'delays' in one or more of their social and emotional capabilities, as well as being disconnected from positive relationships, programmes and opportunities in their school, home and community.

Such pupils require 'Strength Building' interventions. Individual action plans for 'strengthening' such pupils should focus on developing their social and emotional skills and values. Responsibility for strengthening these skills can be assumed by class teachers, SENDCO, Inclusion Leader or Children and Families Support Worker and involve support from other professionals, such Educational Welfare Officer and other outside agencies.

Parents/carers will be informed of the programme, their consent obtained and wherever possible parents will be involved and contribute to this intervention, reinforcing these skills beyond the school setting.

Level 4 - Interventions High Risk Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviours assessed as level 4 are severe and involve a significant threat to the safety and welfare of any or all of the pupils involved. Such severe bullying concerns may be new or may have proved resistant to earlier school interventions and have now been assessed as high risk. The school's Safeguarding Procedures will need to be invoked. Multi Agency Support Team meeting to be organised to develop an inter-agency risk management plan. This may incorporate intensive support services to the pupils involved and their families.

Appendix 2

Socialisation, In-group Identity, Interpersonal Relationships and Unkindness - a guide for parent and carers

The language that we use to describe pupils' interpersonal relationships is extremely important. The blanket term bullying can be "she looked at me in a funny way" or could be something as serious as assault requiring hospitalisation. When we discuss these issues, it is vital that we acknowledge the level of seriousness and the level of intervention that is required.

Many issues arise from the way that pupils **socialise**. Many pupils play physically without a lot of talking or oral communication. In these scenarios, pupils often vie for physical dominance or status as a skilful individual. Competition is often tangible, which is fine if you win and isn't if you lose or seek dominance and don't achieve your aim. These are the slings and arrows of life, and nobody has a right to be "top dog".

Others play in a group and a clear social hierarchy emerges with pupils taking on different roles. Leadership such as who chooses which games to play, and which person is allowed to play can cause upset and friction. "In group identity" and creating strong bonds by leaving another child out is very hurtful to pupils. This can be bullying if it carries on over a period of time. It is however usually transient and short lived with the "in group" shifting and changing rapidly.

The most common year groups for these issues are Year 3 and 4 when the longevity of friendships is being established. This is human nature and present in all schools. That does not mean that we will not intervene, try to influence friendships or be influential. We always try to shape good friendships in school.

Understanding the needs of others, turn taking and sharing is a developmental issue. Pupils are not born with this - they learn and develop this over time through strong adult role models and behavioural strategies. Tolerance, understanding and a sense of justice develops as time goes by and at different rates for different pupils.

We are committed as a school to shaping positive socialisation and mitigating the effects of in-group problems and parents should contact us to tell us how their child is feeling, without feeling that it is necessarily a disciplinary matter or a complaint. We are wise and experienced practitioners, and we will listen to each case and decide how best to intervene.

All concerns will be logged centrally so we can monitor patterns of behaviour and follow up incidents no matter how minor they may appear. Acorns grow into trees!

Appendix 3

Dealing with an incident of Alleged Bullying Behaviour - Summary

FLOW CHART TO FOLLOW

Appendix 4

Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour – Holistic Approaches – LE to draft with BSF

Appendix 5

One page Bullying Policy