

# **The Grange School**

# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**June 2018**  
**To review June 2019**

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## **POLICY DETAILS FOR ANTI BULLYING**

### **Definition**

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident that casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.'

Bullying includes incidents/comments related to the race, gender and/or sexual orientation of the person being bullied. This can be characterised by: abusive name calling, comments about appearance/attractiveness, inappropriate touching, sexual innuendo, and homophobic language.

At The Grange School staff, parents and children work together to create 'a positive, caring and mutually respectful environment'. 'We will ensure that everyone feels valued and safe in school'. Bullying, either verbal, physical or indirect will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of all to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with incidents quickly and effectively.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

### **Strategy Guidelines for dealing with bullying**

#### **Identification of Incidents**

In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at The Grange School we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- ◆ All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils
- ◆ All staff listen, believe, act
- ◆ Peer Mediators/Friendship Stop are there as a child's first contact point, if they feel they cannot tell an adult.
- ◆ Butterfly Box in classrooms where children can put written notes if they feel they cannot speak about their problem

## Principles to adopt when dealing with reported incidents

- ◆ never ignore suspected bullying
- ◆ don't make premature assumptions
- ◆ listen carefully to all accounts - several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth
- ◆ adopt a problem-solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves
- ◆ follow-up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed

*The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too.*

- ◆ *Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding. Remember Listen, believe, act*
- ◆ *Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise a member of the Senior Leadership Team.*
- ◆ *Discussions with the perceived bully. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable. If they own up then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Behaviour Policy.*
- ◆ *If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts.*
- ◆ *Conduct separate discussions with parents of bully and victim. This may involve a Senior Leader.*
- ◆ *Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, exclusion from school during lunchtimes, exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s).*
- ◆ *Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition.*
- ◆ *As the behaviour of the bully improves, then favoured activities etc. can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.*

Behaviour / Incident Forms should always be completed. In addition, all allegations of bullying must be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher, in order that they can be recorded in the school log. In some cases of severe bullying, a fixed term exclusion may be used, with clear expectations of behaviour discussed with bully and parents on return.

Following discussions with students and parents we may involve external agencies to work with either the bully or the victim depending on need.

## **Prevention of Bullying**

- ◆ Through assemblies and tutorials, ensure that all students are aware of what types of behaviour are inappropriate and what are the effects of bullying; including specific proactive work on prevention of bullying on the playground
- ◆ Raise awareness of how to be an "active bystander"
- ◆ Raising self - esteem in all children; including specific work with any children perceived as bullying or being bullied
- ◆ Through PHSE lessons provide forums for discussing issues related to bullying and developing personal strategies for dealing with bullies. Invite in counselling services, such as Lowdown.
- ◆ Make all pupils aware that they have the right to take action against bullying behaviour.
- ◆ Provide parents with guidelines about how to help their children.
- ◆ Deal seriously and sensitively with any complaints of bullying.

## **Anti Bullying Strategies**

Pupils can be taught to be assertive and to work co-operatively.

### **Co-operative Group Work - from age 5**

When this is integrated into normal classroom practice, pupils can:

- ◆ explore issues and controversies by considering different points of view
- ◆ be more tolerant of others and more willing to listen
- ◆ trust those of the opposite gender and those from other ethnic groups
- ◆ become better integrated into the peer group

Children work together on shared tasks, involving co-operation and individual accountability. For example, groups of pupils in 'expert' groups research aspects of a topic. The 'experts' then return to the 'home' group to instruct one another and produce a joint piece of work. In a final plenary session, children are debriefed about the task that they have just done, or the way in which they have worked together, or both.

Variants include trust-building exercises, co-operative games, problem-solving activities, discussion groups, role play and simulations. All share some essential aspects: pupils work together and help one another, managing conflicts within the group, there are tasks needing a group effort, children share information and divide work towards common goals, roles vary within groups: leading, minuting, problem-solving, tidying up.

Working together as colleagues, relationships sometimes develop into real friendships. Potential victims of bullying can be drawn into working groups with other children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.

## **Circle Time - from age 5**

Time can be set aside each week for teachers and pupils to sit in a circle and take part in enjoyable activities, games and discussion. The positive atmosphere generated in the well-managed circle usually spreads into other areas of class activity. Circle Time:

- creates a safe space to explore issues of concern
- explores relationships with adults and peers
- enhances effective communication
- affirms the strengths and enhances the self-esteem of each member

Circles last for 20-30 minutes, at the beginning or end of a session. Participants listen carefully, making eye-contact with one another and address particular problems - for example, relationships, anger, fighting and bullying.

The teacher and pupils agree on simple, positive rules which encourage the group to:

- focus on their own feelings and those of others
- listen to one another and tolerate others' views
- learn to take turns
- discuss difficult issues using a problem-solving approach

Putting this method into practice needs good organisation and links to other anti-bullying strategies.

## **Befriending - from age 9**

Befriending involves assigning selected pupil volunteers to 'be with' or 'befriend' peers whom teachers have referred. Befrienders:

- need friendly personal qualities
- give support with emotional and social problems - newness to a school, difficulty making friends, upset at separation or loss, being bullied or socially excluded
- run after-school clubs offering companionship and activities to peers who would otherwise be miserable and alone
- may share a common difficulty - for example bereavement - perhaps setting up a support group

The befriended feel more positive about themselves having had someone to talk to about their problems. Befrienders feel more confident and value other people more. The school becomes safer and more caring as relationships improve generally. Befrienders need training in active listening, assertiveness and leadership. Educational psychologists, counsellors and PSHE advisers can help.

## **The Support Group Approach - from age 9**

A support group is formed for the bullied pupil made up of those involved in the bullying, and bystanders. Responsibility for change lies with the participants in the

bullying. The first aim is to get the bully to identify with the victim, and the second to help resolve the problem. There are several steps:

- the group's facilitator chats with the victim and a support group of around 6-8 pupils is set up. As well as pupils involved in the bullying, friends of the victim can take part;
- with the victim's agreement, their own feelings are communicated to the group.
- The facilitator makes clear that the purpose is to take joint responsibility and find a solution. Suggestions on how to help are sought, but the key aim is a joint commitment to take action;
- each group member is interviewed individually a week later to review progress and report back on their contribution to resolving the problem. The bullied pupil is also interviewed. Whilst some group members might not have kept fully to their good intentions, the main criterion for success is that the bullying has stopped.

### **Mediation by adults - from age 9**

Methods focus on pupils who have been bullying others regularly for some time, as well as those being bullied. The aim is to establish ground rules that will enable the pupils to co-exist at the school. There is a simple script available:

- hold brief, non-confrontational, individual 'chats' with each pupil in a quiet room without interruptions - the bullying pupils first get agreement with each that the bullied pupil is unhappy and that they will help improve the situation - if they cannot suggest ways to do this be prescriptive
- chat supportively with the bullied pupil - helping them to understand how to change if thought to have 'provoked' the bullying
- check progress a week later, then meet all involved to reach agreement on reasonable long-term behaviour - at this stage participants usually cease bullying
- check whether the bullying starts again or targets another pupil
- if bullying persists, combine the method with some other action targeted specifically at that child, such as parental involvement or a change of class

The approach is successful, at least in the short term, provided the whole process is worked through. Alone, it cannot tackle all forms of bullying, and it may not have long-term success unless backed up by other procedures, including firm disciplinary ones.

### **Assertiveness training groups - primary pupils**

In a safe, supportive environment, bullied pupils talk about their experiences, and learn and practise effective responses. They avoid either any use of threats or trying to manipulate or intimidate, and keep responses honest and transparent. Pupils feel more secure and in control, with less anger and despair. Responding in a neutral but direct way takes the heat out of the situation.

The younger the pupils, the shorter the sessions and the smaller the group. The optimum time for Year 4 or 5 pupils is 20 minutes with a maximum of six or eight

pupils. Secondary groups can work from 45 minutes to an hour and a half. Sitting in a circle without desks, a typical group will learn one technique a session:

- making assertive statements
- resisting manipulation and threats
- dealing with name calling
- escaping safely from physical restraint
- enlisting support from bystanders
- boosting self-esteem
- remaining calm in stressful situations

Once a group has begun, no new pupils should be admitted; however, pupils can drop out at any time. Lunchtime groups are viewed more like a club than a withdrawal class, and pupils can be more honest about whether they wish to attend or not. They use their own situations to practise, giving them confidence to use the techniques outside the group and experiment with different strategies.

Sometimes it may be better to work with pupils individually than to construct a group involving pupils who have not been badly bullied. Do not mix victims with aggressors. The last meeting should be carefully managed to emphasise the gains the pupils have made from the group, but at the same time to draw the group to an end.

Groups need regular meetings with the same member of staff, books, materials, and a comfortable meeting room - free from interruptions, allowing space for role-play. Educational psychologists and PSHE staff can offer training or referral.

### **Working with victims**

The behaviour of certain pupils can contribute to bullying, though this in no way justifies it. Some pupils find it hard to concentrate in class, are hyperactive, or behave in ways that irritate others. They may get angry easily and fight back when attacked or even slightly provoked - and a large number of classmates and adults, including the teacher may dislike them. They may also bully weaker pupils.

Parents and teachers should co-operate in identifying such behaviour. The pupil needs improved social skills; assertiveness, conflict resolution and stress management are all worth developing. Friends could give feedback on annoying behaviour. Adults can encourage such friendships. Other professionals may work with the pupil or family.