



Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Agreed by Governors: January 2020

Review Date: January 2022

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors)

Signed: _____ (Headteacher)

Sherdley Primary School – Anti Bullying Policy

Introduction

“Bullying is the repeated intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where there is an imbalance of power. It can be physical, verbal, psychological, face to face or through cyberspace.”
(www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk)

Principles

Vision: ‘Growing together, respecting each other.’

Mission Statement: To inspire children to achieve their true potential in a happy and safe environment.

Convention of Children’s Rights

This policy directly links to the Convention of Children’s Rights.

Article 2 – The convention applies to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

Article 3 – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 28 – Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Discussions in school must respect children’s dignity. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 31 – Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic acts.

Article 12 – Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 13 - (freedom of expression) Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

Article 14 - (freedom of thought, belief and religion) Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide their child as they grow up.

Article 15- (freedom of association) Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 16 - (right to privacy) Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child’s private, family and home life, including protecting children from unlawful attacks that harm their reputation.

This policy should be read alongside our Positive Behaviour Policy.

The policy has been developed through consultation with staff, parents and pupils and by the Policy Review Committee of the Governing Body. It is in line with the St Helens Council and Safeguarding Board publication “Guidelines for dealing with Bullying, Harassment and Hate Crime in Schools 2011.”

Bullying Hurts! No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has a right to be treated with respect. Children, young people and adults who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Our Positive Behaviour Policy outlines our expectations of all children’s behaviour, consequences for not meeting these expectations as well as our stages of consequence. It is the responsibility of all adults working in our school to model desired behaviour and recognise pupils’ successes. We work in partnership with our parents and carers in helping their children to behave well and to make good choices. We know that our children are individuals with unique experiences and lives which vary from day to day. We understand how these positive and negative experiences may present themselves through behaviour. (Positive Behaviour Policy) Everyone within the school community has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Definition of Bullying

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider bullying to be:

“Deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time and in circumstances where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.”

This definition was recognised and accepted in case law (Hansen v Isle of White Council)

Bullying is therefore:

- Repetitive and persistent
- Intentionally harmful
- Involves an imbalance of power

Bullying can take many forms:

- **verbal abuse:** name-calling, saying nasty things
- **physical abuse:** hitting, kicking, scratching, pushing
- **emotional abuse:** making threats, spreading rumours, being blackmailed, telling lies about another child, excluding a child from friendship groups or activities
- **cyberbullying:** sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages through email, texts, games, chat rooms, social media, messaging apps etc., excluding another child from online games and groups, creating or sharing embarrassing or malicious photos or videos, encouraging someone to self-harm
- **being a bystander:** encouraging, joining in, watching or colluding with the child who bullies.

Mental Health

At Sherdley Primary School, we aim to create a positive and caring ethos in which good relationships can flourish, high standards are achieved and all children are encouraged to reach their potential. We actively encourage children to show respect for themselves and those around them. Bullying is usually targeted behaviour that is repetitive and persistent. It can have long-lasting effects on children’s mental health and academic performance.

Bullying can be harmful and affect children’s mental health in a number of ways.

This may include children:

- feeling sad, depressed or anxious
- having low self-esteem
- socially isolating themselves
- having explosive and angry outbursts
- self-harming
- having suicidal thoughts.

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/risks-and-protective-factors/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

Staff with Key Responsibility for Anti-Bullying

At Sherdley Primary, concerns over incidents of bullying maybe reported to any member of staff in the first instance. This may be escalated to one of the following people:

- The Anti-Bullying Lead, Assistant Head and Senco, Mrs K Bennett.
- The Deputy Headteacher, Mrs C Robertson also has senior responsibility for Safeguarding.
- Key Stage leaders, Mrs C Baxter, Mrs C Fleming and Mrs S Summers also have responsibility for dealing initially with concerns.
- The Headteacher, Mr A McCoy.

The Headteacher will report the number of incidents of bullying to Governors each term.

Sherdley Primary School takes all forms of bullying seriously.

Bullying can happen for any number of reasons, but if a child is seen as weaker or different in some way they can be more at risk. This might be because of their physical appearance, race, culture, gender identity, sexuality, disability, family situation (i.e. growing up in care or parents divorcing) religion or beliefs etc. It could also be because a child is shy or introverted, appears anxious, vulnerable or has low self-esteem.

When bullying takes place, there is often a significant, perceived power imbalance between the child involved in bullying, and the child who is bullied.

Children with mental health problems are more than twice as likely as children without mental health problems to be bullied online.

Children from minority groups are more likely to face discriminatory bullying, this includes LGBTQ+ pupils, ethnic minority pupils, and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We follow and seek guidance from anti-discrimination laws.

Incidents of bullying will be recorded in line with the St Helens Council "Guidelines for dealing with Bullying, Harassment and Hate Crime in Schools 2011". At Sherdley bullying incidents are recorded on CPOMS and SIMS.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Staff and other adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate accordingly:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school-phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts/ threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the mornings
- Begins to do poorly with schoolwork
- Comes home with damaged clothes, possessions or books
- Asks for or starts stealing money
- Continually loses dinner or other money
- Has unexplained injuries
- Comes home starving
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts bullying other children/siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the phone or internet
- Is nervous or jumpy when a cyber message is received.

Legal / National Requirements

The school's responsibilities are covered by the following legislation:

Every Child Matters
Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017
The Equality Act 2010
The Education and Inspections Act 2006
Disability Discrimination Act 2005
The Children Act 2004
Education Act 2002
Anti-Social Behaviour act 2003
The Children's Homes Regulations 2001
The Local Government Act 2000
Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
School Standards Framework Act 1998
Human Rights Act 1998
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018

Current Government Guidance

The most recent guidance for schools is contained within the DFE document Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools. Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff. Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying 2018.

Prevention (Moved further up)

All staff at Sherdley who are involved in the education and/or supervision of children will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the school's policy consistently if episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will consistently reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

In addition, the issue of bullying will be raised with pupils at a number of levels including:

- School leaders will communicate to all pupils and staff that bullying is unacceptable and emphasise the impact it can have on individuals. At Sherdley Primary we respect, promote and celebrate diversity within and outside of our school community.
- At whole school level – through assemblies when children will be informed of the school's policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place.
- At classroom level – Schools can reduce bullying by teaching pupils social and emotional skills during personal, social health and economic (PSHE) lessons, and reinforcing these skills throughout the curriculum. Skills that help to protect children against bullying include, learning how to: co-operate with others, be tolerant, show empathy, build healthy relationships and resist inappropriate pressure. These skills will also develop pupils' resilience and coping skills and help them to negotiate conflict constructively. Circle time delivered by both teachers and our Pastoral Team, can also help pupils get to know each other a little better and develop understanding and empathy.
- During anti-bullying week – early November – each year, Mrs K Bennett Anti-bullying Lead, will deliver workshops and assemblies to each class throughout school.
- Workshops will also be delivered to parents and carers throughout the school year by Mrs K Bennett – Anti-bullying Lead.
- School leaders, governors and trustees, school staff, and parents and carers need to work together to design an effective whole-school strategy to prevent bullying. This may include: building strong relationships with parents and carers before any crisis emerges so that difficult conversations about behaviour are easier and more productive.

- At individual level – children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance.
- Children who have bullied others will be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to bring their unacceptable behaviour under control and to prevent further incidents.
- We recognise that there are particular times when children may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements will be made to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.
- Also, there are locations about the school in which incidents or bullying are more likely to occur and again arrangements will be made to ensure that these are properly supervised, or pupils will be forbidden access to these areas.
- Children will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is fully investigated.
- Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with the class teacher at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- Similarly, if parents believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying child helped to change their behaviour.
- Training school staff to help them understand the different types of bullying and the impact these may have on mental health and wellbeing. Effective training should help staff to feel confident to tackle bullying, manage challenge behaviours, and know how to deal with different situations, such as prejudice-based language, for example adopting a firm but non-judgmental and non-shaming approach to addressing bullying behaviours – and making sure to separate the child from the behaviour

Implementation

The Headteacher has a legal duty to bring these procedures to the attentions of all staff, pupils and parents.

Sherdley Primary School is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that its policy is applied consistently.

All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of children will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall with the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the victim receives what support is required; the bully is informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record is made of the incident. In all cases the class teacher must be informed who will then ensure the Team Leader and Anti-Bullying Lead – Mrs K Bennett - is aware of the issue.

All children need to be aware that staff will be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported. Parents will also be informed and the incidents will be recorded on CPOMS.

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.

School will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and will ensure the victim is safe and also may include:

- immediate action to prevent further incidents and to secure the child's safety
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents
- sympathy and empathy
- increasing supervision of children
- counselling

- befriending
- assertiveness training
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mediation/peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability)
- arrangements to review progress

Sherdley Primary School takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, realistic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way. The positive use of sanctions can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and in promoting change.

The school's response will be proportionate – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary, they will be applied consistently and fairly. There will be immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress and the following options will be considered:

- engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable
- loss of lunch/breaktime privileges
- the child reporting to a Team Leader on a regular basis
- daily report which goes home to parents
- removal from class/group
- withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not essential part of curriculum)
- parents informed
- counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)
- fixed periods of exclusion
- permanent exclusion (in extreme cases which may involve violence)

Reporting and Recording Incidents of Bullying

When an incident of bullying is suspected or confirmed, it will be recorded using the school SIMs Behaviour Recording system and CPOMS.

These records are monitored by the Behaviour Lead and the Headteacher who may then need to complete an LA Incident Recording Form. This form is a statutory requirement as set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The form will be returned to the LA Healthy Schools Team.

Due to the nature of bullying, it may also be classed as a Hate Crime. This can be defined as:

“Behaviour that a victim or any other person thinks was caused by hatred of age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or sexual orientation.”

Any form of hate crime should be reported to the police (in an emergency situation call 999 or complete an online form at www.merseyside.police.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2814)

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years through consultation with stakeholders.

The Headteacher will provide information to Governors concerning the number and nature of bullying incidents on a termly basis.

The policy's effectiveness will be evaluated by considering the following indicators of change:

Reduction / increase in the levels and duration of reported bullying incidents

Increased willingness to 'tell' about bullying by bullied pupils, their parents or bystanders

Attendance

Achievement and involvement

Pupil numbers

School performance and local authority surveys related to bullying.

Links to other school policies

Further information may be found in the following policies:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding
- E-safety
- SEND

It will be reviewed bi-annually unless there are changes to national or local guidance prior to this date.