



ANTI-BULLYING AND CYBER BULLYING POLICY

THE MILL PRIMARY ACADEMY



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This policy should be read in conjunction with the School Vision Statement, the Behaviour and Relationships Policy, the Home School Agreement, the Equalities Policy, and PSHE Policies

What is bullying?

Bullying is the repeated verbal taunting, or physical assault, of an individual, or a group, by an individual or a group. The perpetrators usually view themselves as being in a position of power or superiority over the victims, often they have been victims previously.

In school, victims of bullying are often perceived by the other children as “different” from them. This might be because they are very able or they have special educational needs; it might be because they wear glasses or are fat or thin; it might be because their parents are seen by the other children as unusual - they could be in single-sex relationships, or have a negative image locally; sometimes it might be because of the colour of the victim’s skin or their ethnicity; or because they don’t fit into the social norms.

It is our belief that children who behave as bullies are expressing personal problems or anxieties, or a lack of self-esteem through their behaviour. We need to support them alongside our support for the victims of bullying, whilst making it absolutely clear that bullying is not acceptable and that this behaviour has to change. They need to know that they will be supported to make that change.

However it is always made clear that bullying in any form is unacceptable.

Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, internet, chat room, discussion group or instant messaging or through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS) is cyber bullying. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated at any level, and consequences exist for students who choose to bully others in any way.

The Aim of our Policy

It is our aim to build a school community where everyone respects and supports everyone else, and where we value everyone’s contributions and celebrate people’s differences. In such a community, bullying will be rare, and the community itself will be well equipped to deal with it.

Our community will be safe for everyone, and when incidents of bullying arise, children and adults alike will feel confident in their ability to resolve them together.

Policy into Practice The Children

It is our belief that the children should be at the heart of our anti-bullying work. They are the ones who know where they do and don’t feel safe, and why. We speak to the children often about how they feel and what we can do to make them feel safe, especially in assemblies and circle times.

Anti - bullying and forming and maintaining positive relationships is taught explicitly in our curriculum within the PSHE scheme of work, which covers friendship and personal safety for each year group. We impress upon the children the importance of telling an adult if

they or anyone else are the victims of bullying. We ensure that the children know what bullying is and that children should come to school expecting to have a good day free from criticism or harm and that this is their right. In order to ensure that this is always clear we have an anti-bullying week every year.

The Adults

All our policies are shared by all adults who work within the school, and our systems for reporting and responding to bullying are understood by all children and adults.

- **All staff are involved in reporting and investigating bullying incidents**
- **The headteacher (or a senior member of staff) will plan and monitor the support plans for victims and perpetrator**
- **All staff and children may be involved in implementing the anti-bullying support plan.**
- **A report on bullying goes to the GB annually**

Parents and Carers

All parents and carers sign our *Home/ School Agreement* which outlines expectations for behaviour.

We ask parents and carers to keep us informed of bullying incidents involving their own children or those that they have witnessed.

Parents and carers concerned about bullying will be seen as soon as possible by the Headteacher or a senior member of staff, and their concerns will always be taken seriously. They will be kept informed of any action that is taken to support their children, and helped to support them further at home.

In most cases, parents of children whose bullying behaviour is causing concern will be contacted and their support sought. However, where peer group intervention is being implemented, parental involvement may be sought at a later stage in the process. A parent has the right to know that their child has been involved in bullying, even if this information is provided after the situation has been resolved.

Reporting Bullying

- Any report of bullying by a child will be always be listened to and taken seriously by every adult in the school.
- The adult who has heard the allegation will investigate it themselves, or will ask another member of staff to do so immediately, and make sure the victim knows who is going to talk to them about it.
- If it is clear that this is a bullying incident a record of this will be made and placed in the pupil's record. The headteacher or a senior member of staff will then deal with the matter.
- If the incident does not involve bullying, the appropriate adult will take time to explain this to the "victim" and will help him/her to deal with the problem in appropriate ways.

Bullying doesn't have to happen in school for the school to become involved. Teachers have a statutory power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers a specific statutory duty to regulate pupils' behaviour in these circumstances 'to such extent as is reasonable'. The same procedures as are adopted on site will apply.

Action Against Bullying

- The victims will be taken to a safe and private place and encouraged to report everything that has happened to them and this will be written down by an adult.
- Immediate action will be taken to ensure their safety.
- A support plan will then be set up for both the victims and the children carrying out the bullying.
- The action may be to set up a friendship circle (the **No Blame Bullying** model), in which case only the parents and carers of the victims would be informed in the first instance.
- The incident may warrant more serious disciplinary intervention, in which case parents and carers of both children or groups of children would be contacted.
- Children who continue to bully others in spite of all the support offered, or whose actions threaten the safety of others in school may be excluded from school.

No Blame model:

The first step is to interview the victim, with the aim of finding out how he/she feels. The child will be asked to draw a picture or write something to communicate his/her distress. With the child's full knowledge and approval, the next step involves getting together the children involved in the bullying (including bystanders) and perhaps some non-involved children. This group (which does not include the victim) will then be made aware of the victim's distress and will be encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to come up with ideas for making the bullied person feel happier. It should be mentioned that the No Blame Approach (which may mistakenly be viewed as a technique which condones bullying) can also be described as the Support Group Approach.

Intervention Strategies (see also the Behaviour and Relationships Policy)

All the strategies that are used in the implementation of the Behaviour and Relationships Policy will be appropriate to use in some bullying cases.

The clear message we receive from the children is that the best strategies are often those they implement themselves.

Hence, we try to use friendship circles, peer mentoring and buddy systems as often as possible, with regular and consistent support for the children involved from a member of staff to ensure their success.

Such programmes are monitored by the senior member of staff who has set them in process, and outcomes are monitored closely over several weeks. Intervention should never be withdrawn until the adult supervising the process is sure that there is no danger of any recurrence. This step by step process should be recorded in detail.

Further support for the victim or perpetrator, such as work to develop self-esteem, anger management, or peer group relationships, may be sought through the SENCO within Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs).

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to bully a person or group. Bullying is repeated behaviour by an individual or group with the intent to harm another person or group. Cyberbullying can involve social, psychological and even, in extreme cases, physical harm. It can cause shame, guilt, fear, withdrawal, loneliness and depression.

Because children and young people are often online it can be hard for them to escape Cyberbullying. Nasty messages, videos and gossip can spread fast online and are hard to delete. Sometimes the attackers can be anonymous and hard to stop. This can make it

harder for adults to see and manage. Children also do not know that teachers and school staff can help - they see it as being outside school hours therefore not to do with school. This is not the case. Any cyber bullying will be dealt with in the same way that other forms of bullying are dealt with as we have a duty of care to the children in our charge.

The school will do regular work to ensure that children know this.

How teachers can help

Research shows students often don't tell adults about cyberbullying. They fear we will disconnect them from supportive friends and family and may overreact and make the situation worse. There are some signs you might be able to pick up at school that indicate a child may be the target of cyberbullying or struggling for other reasons.

Look for:

- changes in personality, e.g. more withdrawn, anxious, sad or angry, tears
- appearing more lonely or distressed
- unexpected changes in friendship groups
- less interaction with students at school
- possible peer rejection
- decline in school work
- excessive sleepiness or lack of focus
- higher levels of absenteeism
- increased negative self-perception
- a decline in physical health
- suicidal thoughts—this should be reported to the administration and the parents/carers immediately for appropriate action.

Responding to cyberbullying

If you notice a child in your class or the school yard showing any of the above signs, or other worrying and out of character behaviours, tell them you are worried and want to help. If they won't open up to you recruit others to talk to them (another teacher, CP officer or school counsellor). Keep a close eye on their interactions and ask other relevant staff to do the same, particularly at recess and lunchtime

Interventions or sanctions for any form of bullying might include:

For the victim	for the perpetrator
Play inside at break with chosen group of friends arrange for group of friends (or adult) to walk home with place / group changed within class adult / buddy monitors playtime to ensure victim is not alone advice / support from class at Circle Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • miss playtime / lunchtime • stay in with friends • stay in by themselves • taken home by parent / carer • leave school five minutes after other children • adult / peer mentor monitors playtime • place / group changed in class • change of class • seek advice of peers at Circle Time • county support is sought for offering support to the bully • Exclusion from school

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. It is crucial that the adult implementing the anti-bullying intervention responds to each individual case, and supports the victim / perpetrator according to their needs.

Reviewed: March 2015

Date for Review: March 2016

Signed Headteacher _____ Date _____

Signed Chair of Governors _____ Date _____