



# OWLSMOOR PRIMARY

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Status of Policy	Date
Statutory	No
Reviewed	Every two years
Policy written	
Last reviewed	January 2023
Review due	January 2025

## **Owlsmoor's Anti-Bullying Policy**

**This policy has due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act.**

**This anti-bullying policy demonstrates the schools commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) Article 19 (protection from all forms of violence).**

The school has a 'duty of care' towards its pupils with regard to bullying. The Headteacher and staff stand in 'loco parentis' (in place of parents). This duty of care includes protecting pupils from harm from bullying.

This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligation under the Education Act to:

- ☑ have a policy to prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils
- ☑ make a written copy of the anti-bullying statement available on request
- ☑ set out the strategies to be followed with a system to implement them and a mechanism for monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness.

### **Aims of this policy**

- To assist in creating an ethos in which attending school is a positive experience for all members of the school community.
- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable.
- To enable everyone to feel safe at school and encourage pupils to report incidences of bullying.
- To deal effectively with bullying.
- To support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to.
- To help and support bullies to change their attitudes, as well as their behaviour, and understand why it needs to change.
- To liaise with parents and other appropriate members of the school community.
- To ensure all members of the school community feel responsible for combating bullying.

### **Objectives**

- To maintain and develop effective listening systems for pupils and staff within the school
- To involve all staff in dealing with incidents of bullying effectively and promptly.
- To equip all staff with the skills necessary to deal with bullying.
- To involve the wider school community (e.g. lunchtime controllers) in dealing effectively with, and if necessary referring, bullying incidents.
- To communicate with parents and the wider school community on the subject of bullying.
- To acknowledge the key role of the class teacher in dealing with incidents of bullying.
- To ensure that all incidents of bullying are recorded and appropriate use is made of the information and where appropriate, shared with relevant organisations.

## **What is Bullying?**

It is important to have an open and agreed definition of bullying. The Scottish Council for Research in education defines bullying as follows:

*“Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. To do this, the bully has to have some sort of power over the victim, a power not always recognisable to the teacher.”*

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- it is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- it is repeated, often over a period of time
- it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can take many forms, but four main types are:

- physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- verbal - name calling, insulting, racist remarks
- indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups
- cyber – use of internet, social networking, texts in a negative unpleasant way.

**However, if two pupils of equal power or strength have an occasional fight or quarrel, this is not bullying.**

## **Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should

investigate if a child:

- 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 or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares

- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received
- bedwetting

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### **Cyber-Bullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new way for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day. It is when one person or a group of people try to threaten or embarrass someone else using a mobile phone or the internet. Cyber-bullying is just as harmful as bullying in the real world and will be dealt with in the same way.

#### Warning Signs

Running away, non-attendance at school, other learning and behavioural difficulties for no obvious reason, the child has injuries with no feasible explanation for them. At Owlsmoor we are keen to identify early signs of bullying and children are encouraged to tell a teacher, parent or friend if they are being bullied.

### **Our School Beliefs**

At Owlsmoor Primary School, we believe that:

- Bullying is undesirable and unacceptable.
- Bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found.
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength, not weakness.
- All members of our school community will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear.
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others.

- All of us have the responsibility to help, in any way we can, if we see someone that is being abused or bullied.
- Our pupils should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously.
- Our pupils should be involved in decision making about matters that concern them.
- We all have a duty to protect individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

Every member of the school community is entitled to expect equality of protection from bullying as well as protection and support from school policies and procedures designed to ensure that the school remains a safe environment in which to teach and learn.

### **Recording of and Response to Bullying Incidents**

All complaints of alleged bullying incidents from both children and parents are taken seriously and investigated fully. Any member of staff must report any incidents of bullying to the class teacher or senior member of staff.

Incidents of bullying are recorded on CPOMS and given to the Headteacher for scrutiny and, if necessary, further investigation. These records will be kept on file in the Headteacher's office and in behaviour records within the classroom.

Incidents will be dealt with as detailed in the Behaviour Policy. If the bullying is not resolved and is repeated, the Headteacher will meet with parents of the children or parties involved and take further action. Severe, persistent bullying will lead to exclusion or Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Parental Involvement (Appendix 1)**

At Owlsmoor we encourage parents to maintain a strong communication link with Class Teachers, the Headteacher and the Family Support Adviser. Should any incidents arise the first link of communication is with the Class Teacher.

### **Procedures for Investigating a Bullying Incident**

1. Listen to and record the victim's report of the incident.
2. Listen to and record the witness's report of the incident.
3. Meet with all parties involved – discuss and record their report of the incident.
4. Record agreed steps to be taken to improve situation, such as sanctions e.g. remove bully/bullies from playground, remove any privileges according to seriousness of incident – length of time to be stated.
5. Agree with parties involved the strategies to avoid future bullying e.g. circle times, face to face meeting with victim/s - give an agreed timescale to resolve situation. Agree a date for a meeting to review the incident.
6. All adults involved in the case will frequently monitor the situation and ensure that the victim/s feels safe and secure.

7. Review meeting – if situation is not resolved further steps will be taken including parental involvement, a Personal Support Plan for the bully to adhere to. Failing that, exclusion would be the next option.
8. Involvement of other agencies such as Social Services or the Police Youth Liaison Officer may also be the next option. All adults involved in the case will frequently monitor the situation and ensure that the victim feels safe and secure.

### **Strategies to Reduce Bullying**

The school adopts a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and bullies. These include: co-operative group work, circle time, Circle of Friends (when appropriate), peer mediation, lunchtime assistant training, buddy systems, PSHE programmes, self-esteem workshops, friendship week and anti-bullying week.

### **Confidentiality**

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. Child Protection procedures should be followed when any disclosures are made. Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of external support, staff should seek consent of the parents to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parent / carer. While we cannot guarantee confidentiality, pupils will be informed of national and local help lines, if appropriate, where confidentiality can be maintained.

**Owlsmoor Primary School**

**BULLYING: Don't suffer in silence - Information for parents and families**

All schools are likely to have some problems with bullying at one time or another. At Owlsmoor Primary School we aim to reduce and prevent bullying.

Bullying behaviour includes:

- name-calling and teasing
- physical violence
- threats
- isolating individuals from group activities
- cyber bullying

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping us deal with bullying.

**First**, discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve the difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

**Second**, watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

**If your child is bullying other children**

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it is wrong
- they copy older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire
- they haven't learnt other, better, ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings
- they enjoy the feeling of power
- they are being or have been bullied themselves

To stop your child from bullying others:

- talk with your child; explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy

- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's class teacher; explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing; discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop him/her bullying others
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is cooperative or kind to other people

### **If your child has been bullied**

- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing in telling you about the bullying.
- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience.
- Make a note of what your child says - particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.
- Explain to your child that, should any further incidents occur, he/she should report them to a teacher immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher to discuss the problems your child is experiencing.

### **Talking with teachers about bullying**

- Try and stay calm - bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or maybe has heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened - give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.



Owlsmoor Primary School

**BULLYING: Don't suffer in silence - Information for children**

When you are being bullied:

- be firm and clear - look them in the eye and tell them to stop
- get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- tell an adult what has happened straight away.

After you have been bullied:

- tell a teacher or another adult in your school
- tell your family
- if you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- don't blame yourself for what has happened.

When you are talking about bullying with an adult, be clear about:

- what has happened to you
- how often it has happened
- who was involved
- who saw what was happening
- where it happened
- what you have done about it already.