FOREFIELD COMMUNITY INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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REVIEWED APRIL 2013
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REVIEWED SEPTEMBER 2020, 2021

Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

At Forefield Community Infant and Nursery School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying and other forms of unacceptable intimidation, including bullying due to gender, sexual orientation, cyber bullying by internet or mobile phone, will not be tolerated and is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all stake holders should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to inform.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff know what The School Policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- To ensure that all feel safe and free from bullying and intimidation.
- To identify and protect vulnerable pupils and groups including those with special educational needs or disabilities; those going through a personal or family crisis; those suffering from a health problem; ethnic minority groups; children in care and those with caring responsibilities.
- To ensure that all children understand what bullying, including cyber/online bullying and homophobic bullying is.
- To build an ethos where learners feel safe and free from threat and intimidation.
- To promote good relationships where all are treated well and where learners care for each other.
- To act promptly and effectively at the first sign of bullying including cyber/online bullying and reduce and eradicate wherever possible all instances of bullying.
- To encourage all stake holders to report any attempted bullying.
- To protect and reassure any victims of bullying.
- To have effective sanctions to deter bullying and to have successful strategies to reform bullies.
- To make this a happy school that is free from bullying of any kind.
- To ensure all stakeholders know we have a zero-tolerance policy on bullying.

What is bullying?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. It is hurtful, deliberate behaviour towards another child that is repeated over time and is difficult for those who are being bullied to stop.

Bullying, including cyber-bullying can take many forms including:
- **Physical** – e.g. pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and any other forms of violence, threats or damage to property or theft
- **Verbal** – e.g. name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- **Emotional** – e.g. excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation
- **Picking on points of difference** – e.g. racism, physical features, family circumstance, sexism

Bullying is not the same as quarrelling – all children will fall out with each other from time to time. This may include, for example, playground games which may become rough due to unthinking, egocentric, young children rather than intentional behaviour.

NOT ALL AGGRESSION IS BULLYING, NOR ALL NAME CALLING. IT BECOMES BULLYING WHEN IT IS EXERCISED THROUGH THE USE OF POWER, RATHER THAN AN EXCHANGE BETWEEN EQUALS.

Peer on Peer abuse

Research indicates that peer-on-peer abuse, involving the physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse of children by their peers is an issue of serious concern within the UK. Children, particularly those living away from home, are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers. Such abuse should always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. It should be subject to the same safeguarding children procedures as apply in respect of any child who is suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm. A significant proportion of sex offences are committed by teenagers and, on occasion, such offences are committed by younger children. Staff should not dismiss some abusive sexual behaviour as 'normal' between young people, and should not develop high thresholds before taking action. It may be appropriate to regard a child's behaviour as abusive if:
- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the child concerned; or the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.
- If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

Expected action taken by all staff:

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator of the harm, simple steps can clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm. It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and

sensitively. It is necessary to gather the facts around what has occurred in a timely manner as young children can forget quickly. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved, for example, do not use the word perpetrator as this creates a 'blame culture' and leaves a child labelled.

In all cases of peer on peer abuse, it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young children and instigating support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

Gather the facts –
- Speak to all the children involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use consistent language and open questions for each account. Do not have a line of questioning but ask the child to recount what happened, only interrupting the child to gain clarity with open questions (where? When? Why? Who?)
- Consider the intent (begin to risk assess)
- Has this been a deliberate or a contrived situation for a child to be able to harm another?
- Decide on the next course of action
- If it is believed from the information that has been gathered that a child may be at risk of significant harm a safeguarding referral to Social Care in-line with the school's Safeguarding Policy should be made immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and a decision made on what will happen next then school will be informed of next steps. If social care and the police intend to pursue a matter further they may ask to speak to the child in school or may ask parents to attend school to be spoken to also. It may also be the case that social care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case the decision can be challenged with the decision maker or their line manager. If on discussion school staff agree with the decision, parents will need to be informed.

Informing Parents-

Parents will be informed should there be a need to inform the police/social care. Once appropriate advice has been sought from the police/social care, parents will be informed of the next steps. In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school will encourage the child to share the information with their parent(s) providing support as the child may be scared to tell parents that they are being harmed in this way.

Points to consider-
What is the age of the children involved? Is there any age difference? In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration around this stage. This however, should not be overlooked should other issues arise (see below).

Where did the incident(s) take place? –

Was the incident in an open visible place to others? If so, was it observed? If not, was more supervision required within this area? What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred? Can each of the children give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the children involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example – regular and repetitive? Is the version of one child different from another and why? What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred? Do the children know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the child's explanation in relation to something that they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the child have an understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other child? In dealing with incidents of this nature, the answers are not always clear cut and advice should be sought from Children's Services Social Care.

Homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people who may be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning.

Who experiences homophobic bullying?

Young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning or who are thought to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning.
Young people who are different in some way.
Young people who have lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual or questioning friends or family or whose parent(s) who are lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual or questioning.
Teachers who are or maybe lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual or questioning.

What does homophobic bullying look like?
It can be hard to identify as it may be going on in secret. Pupils may be reluctant to disclose incidents because they fear staff will assume they are lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual or questioning. Generally homophobic bullying

can present with the same symptoms as other forms of bullying but may also include:

- Verbal abuse – eg spreading rumours that someone is gay
- Physical abuse – exerting physical force or threatening behaviour
- Cyber bullying – spreading rumours on line via social media, text messaging or picture messaging

Whole school ethos to homophobic bullying:

At Forefield Community Infant and Nursery School we believe in equality, thus ensuring that:

- Children and staff irrespective of their sexual orientations to achieve the level of success and self-respect which they deserve while retaining the integrity of their own identities.
- Establish an environment where the school becomes effective in reducing prejudice and raising self esteem.
- We develop a sense of citizenship, celebrating through British Values and Right Respecting School principles linked to the diversity of community
- We provide a safe and welcoming environment in which to learn
- Homophobic bullying will not be tolerated. Perpetrators will be dealt with efficiently and appropriately
- Individuals that are bullied will be supported through collaborative working with parents, teachers, support staff or any appropriate outside agencies and rigorously monitored

Signs of bullying:
Bullying behaviour will affect children in different ways. These may present differently from child to child and can manifest in:

- A child's reluctance to come to school/playground.
- A child refusing to say anything is wrong.
- A child's personal property being damaged or lost
- A child's behaviour changing and becoming withdrawn or anxious
- Parents reporting that a child's eating or sleeping patterns have changed
- There may be a presence of physical symptoms such as marking or bruising

Procedures to address bullying
Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff by the victim, their friend, parent or any other relevant person that the child is in contact with.

- We will use our Behaviour and E-safety Policies effectively to promote good behaviours so that there is a whole school ethos where bullying is unacceptable at Forefield Community Infant and Nursery School
- All staff will be expected to be vigilant and to intervene immediately and effectively if any bullying is observed or reported using reflective

questioning - What happened? How did it make you feel? How can we make things better? Staff will confront the child with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident.

- Any bullying incidents should be reported to appropriate staff that are trained in dealing with such incidents, who will talk to the chid in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with sensitive matters, but speak to those involved using consistent language and questioning, interrupting only to gain clarity. Staff will use "when, where, what, why and who" questioning.

- Staff should consider the intent and begin to risk assess so as to decide on the next course of action in relation to the incident

- The incidents will be recorded by staff using the school pastoral software record system (CPOMS) and coded appropriately to support monitoring of such incidents

- If through information gathering it is felt that the child is at risk then a safeguarding referral to social care should be sought and advice on next steps will be given

- Where a crime has been committed then the police should be informed

- If social care and the police intend to pursue this further they may ask to speak to the child in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to also. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

- Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the issue. This will be in a face to face meeting. The member of staff will keep records of any meetings and outcomes with parents (CPOMS).

- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. A support network and strategies will be put in place for the victims of bullying.

- Any cyber-bullying of staff or pupils, in or out of school, must be reported and then investigated rigorously, in conjunction with any relevant authority including the police if appropriate.

- Strategies will be put in place to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

- The Headteacher will report to the Governors of the Personal Development, Behaviour and Attendance Committee any incidences of bullying.

- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place – However if bullying persists we will liaise with outside agencies and appropriate Local Authority personnel.

- A follow up meeting will be arranged to monitor future developments.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Forefield Community Infant and Nursery School has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

ALL FORMS OF BULLYING ARE UNACCEPTABLE.

Key Messages to Share with the Victim

- It is not their fault
- They are not on their own to face this
- Try not to show that they are upset and to walk away
- Find a grown up to support them e.g. Mrs Boardman in the Rainbow Room

Parents will be requested to:

- Encourage victims to seek help in the here and now e.g. by accessing the Rainbow Room
- Not approach suspected bullies or/and their families directly, but to inform the class teacher, Mrs Boardman school's Pastoral & Education Support Co-ordinator, the Assistant, Senior Assistant or Headteacher
- Reinforce jointly agreed sanctions at home

Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, Forefield Community Infant & Nursery School has due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Actively promote equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Equality Policy, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, E-Safety Policy, Internet Acceptable Use Policies, Social Media and Image Policies.

This policy will be kept under continuous review and will be reviewed at least annually as a whole staff.

Elaine Haney
September 2020

APPENDIX 1

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 unwilling to go to school (school phobic) and changes in their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Complains that they feel ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Has possessions that mysteriously become lost or disappear.
- Has unexplained injuries.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

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

Prevention

We will use the methods below to help children prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Implementation of Behaviour Policy
- Whole School Golden Rules
- Writing a set of school/classroom rules, mutually formulated and agreed
- Signing a behaviour contract
- E-Safety Policy
- PSHE Curriculum: Bullying- identifying what is bullying and how it can be on or offline and RSE curriculum: knowing that differences and similarities are to be celebrated.
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- Reading stories, including social stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- Circle Time
- Making up role-plays
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- An IBP (Individual Behaviour Plan) may be implemented.
- Working with 'Bully Busters'.
- Computing lessons.
- Assemblies – 'Right and Wrong', 'Friendships', 'What makes a Good friend?'
- Development of social, emotional skills including self-confidence and resilience.