

Exminster Community Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Our Vision

To create the best possible environment in which to stimulate the personal and social growth of the children in our school, whilst promoting high quality teaching and learning. This is to be achieved through our E.P.I.C. Vision, which represents the four pillars of Enjoyment, Potential, Inclusion and Community.

'The governing body of a school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school'

Section 175 (2) Education Act 2002

The Staff and Governing Body of Exminster Community Primary School recognises its collective responsibility to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people in accordance with its statutory responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and where appropriate under the Children Acts.

Statement of Intent

At Exminster Primary School we recognise that bullying can occur and that both pupils and staff may be bullied or show bullying behaviour. When it does it can be harmful both physically and emotionally for the victim. It can also be a sign that the child/children carrying out the bullying has underlying issues that need to be addressed. The purpose of this policy is to enable all members of our school community to recognise bullying when it takes place and to deal with it effectively. The aims and rights of our school make clear that bullying is unacceptable.

This policy has been written with reference to key legislation and guidance:

Education Act 2002

Preventing and Tackling bullying – Departmental Advice – Department of Education - 2012

Education and Safer Recruitment 2007

Every Child Matters: A Change for Children (2004)

Education and Inspections Act 2006

DCFS 'Bullying – A Charter for Action'

Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (2007)

Kidscape 2012

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils 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 tell the staff. Staff please refer to the Staff Grievance Policy

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- Teach children how/who to report incidents of bullying to.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

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

- Physical (e.g. Hitting, kicking, theft, using physical aggression)
- Verbal (e.g. Racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling to your face.)
- Emotional/indirect (e.g. Isolating an individual from activities and social acceptance of their peer group, spreading rumours)
- Technological (e.g. Using technology to hurt, individual text messages, social media etc.)

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the *odd occasion* of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

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. Children who are displaying bullying behaviours need to learn different ways of behaving. It is also important that we respond to the needs of the children who are being bullied and provide support.

As a school we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of 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:

Changes in Behaviour: Changes in the behaviour and mood of children are often the most important indicators that a child is a victim bullying. Such changes can include decreased confidence, anxiety, unusual shyness, stammering and being extremely withdrawn around others. However, some victims of a bully become aggressive themselves, and often bully others, particularly younger children.

Change in Usual Route to School or not wanting to go: These are all potential signs of bullying in school, as the child associates school with feelings of dread.

Decreased School Performance: Similarly, if a child is a victim of bullying at school, a negative change in his/her school performance is one of the signs of bullying. Decreased school performance is one of the effects of bullying because kids who are bullied at school cultivate a fear and hatred of school, which affects their academic performance

Possessions Go Missing or Are Damaged: If you begin to notice that a child is routinely losing their possessions or that their possessions are regularly becoming damaged, this could be a result of them being a victim bullying.

Decreased Appetite: A loss of appetite in children is one of the most common symptoms of bullying.

Having Nightmares: Often victims of bullying will experience recurrent nightmares about their bullying experiences. This can also revert to bed wetting.

Physical Signs: Warning signs of physical bullying include unexplained cuts, bruises and scars.

Suicide Threat or Suicide Attempt: The most serious of bullying warning signs is when a child threatens suicide or actually attempts to end his/her life.

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

What do we do to prevent bullying and create a telling and listening school?

The Head Teacher ensures that an audit of current practices takes place bi-annually and that necessary changes to policy/strategies are implemented. Surveys/discussions/observations also inform the outcomes.

1. Raise awareness of bullying (through the curriculum).
2. Raise awareness by addressing bullying through assemblies (at least termly).
3. Raise awareness by PSHE & SEAL being part of every child's entitlement and being woven into the basic curriculum.
4. Reinforce the above via the annual Anti-Bullying Week (November)
5. Ensure that all staff (teaching, non-teaching, lunchtime supervisors, etc) are aware of our anti-bullying procedures.
6. All pupils to have an assigned person of their choice to whom they feel they can talk to in confidence.
7. To ensure that all parents are aware of how the school deals with bullying and that they feel it is dealt with in an effective manner.
8. The use of Rainbow Days to allow the whole school to mix and develop older children as role models.
9. Family SEAL sessions to ensure all parents are fully involved in their children's education and well being.
10. We ensure restorative ethos and culture that supports the development of social and emotional skills – Our EPIC vision!

Language we use

The language we use with the children is very important.

Whilst we do need young people to take responsibility for their actions we try to avoid labelling children as 'bullies' or 'victims'. We do this for a number of reasons:

- You don't necessarily have all the facts around bullying incidents so to label children and young people may be inaccurate.
- It's not always straightforward bully/victim situation.
- To label a young person as a 'bully' could potentially be damaging. You are essentially saying that person is 'bad' and this is rarely the case for a young person.

Instead we say 'a child who has been bullied' or 'a child who has displayed bullying behaviour'.

How do we deal with bullying when it happens?

There is a stepped approach to dealing with situations that mirrors that in the Behaviour Policy. Bullying behaviour is dealt with in the context of the Behaviour Policy. It is essential that separate incidents are classified as either, a bullying incident, simply a disagreement between otherwise friends, or a 'one off' loss of temper or misunderstanding. This is sometimes a difficult aspect of school life for parties to deal with, as personal experience can be emotive and the school must use reliable evidence sources available.

Initial response to complaints of bullying are dealt with by the class teacher.

1. Class teacher
Use of the no-blame approach. Child who has been bullied, child displaying bullying behaviour and witnesses seen separately. Child displaying bullying behaviour given an opportunity to resolve the situation. A review is held in one week after initial meeting, with regular contact with victim in between. The incident will be recorded on CPOMs. Behaviour Team to be informed immediately. Whole staff team informed at the next staff meeting. If there is no resolution to issue after one week, then it will be passed

onto the Behaviour Team. Parents of both the child being bullied and child displaying bullying behaviour will be informed that the school is dealing with the situations.

2. Headteacher/Behaviour Team

Where bullying is persistent, where there is SIGNIFICANT harm or where the impact on the child who has been bullied is significant, the head teacher will be involved. There will be discussion with the child who has been bullied, child displaying bullying behaviour and witnesses separately. There is a continued record of this kept on CPOMs. Possibility of formal involvement of parents made clear to pupil displaying bullying behaviour at this point. Review held in one week after initial meeting, with regular contact with victim in between. If no resolution in an appropriate specified period (pertinent to incident) move to next stage.

3. Contact with parents

Parents would be contacted and asked to discuss with the Headteacher the bullying behaviour. Possible consequences of behaviour would be discussed with parents, in line with the School Positive Behaviour Policy.

Every incident of bullying is different and some may require a different response to that detailed above. In more severe cases stage 2 will be the starting point, in other cases more time may be spent at stage 1. In the majority of cases, it is appropriate for the school to give the pupil displaying bullying behaviour a chance to change his/her behaviour before parents are contacted. It is often difficult to confirm that bullying is taking place and that the incident is not a disagreement between two people of equal power. It is essential that the repeated nature of the behaviour is also confirmed. This requires full investigation at stage 1 and hence it may be necessary for this stage to last longer.

The school will endeavour to use restorative approaches with the person/persons who bully, this may include:

- Circle of Friends/support teams
- One to one sessions with the Family Support Co-ordinator.
- SEAL Art Workshops
- The use of learning mentors.

Support for the Child Being Bullied

Throughout the process the time is spent with the child who has been bullied to listen and provide support. The way it is dealt with will be discussed with the child being bullied and whether they want to meet with the child displaying bullying behaviours to discuss feelings and if possible rebuild the relationship.

The child will be provided with emotional support if it is required. This may include:

- Circle of friends/support teams
- One to one sessions with the Family Support Co-ordinator.
- SEAL Art Workshops
- The use of learning mentors.

Outcomes

The child displaying bullying behaviours will apologise to victim(s)

The child displaying bullying behaviours will receive help to change behaviour

The child displaying bullying behaviours will receive a consequence in line with the Behaviour Policy

Staff will continue to monitor the situation

If possible, the pupils will be reconciled

After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered

All staff are asked to encourage the children in the following:

1. To be aware of what bullying is
2. To be assertive, not aggressive
3. To report incidents of bullying they experience or witness

4. To be aware that something will be done

Staff are also asked to do the following:

1. Be aware of changes in children's behaviour
2. Record and monitor any incidents in the behavior logs
3. Regularly remind children of how to deal with bullying
4. Liaise with the assigned person if the pupil who is being bullied or the pupil displaying bullying behaviours are in your class or care.
5. Encourage parents to report any incidents or changes of behaviour in their child.

All parents are asked to:

1. Report incidents as soon as possible
2. Adhere the school policy
3. Support the school's strategies
4. Encourage their child to behave appropriately at school
4. Work in partnership with the school/any involved agencies

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)	0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Childline	0800 1111
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk
Kidscape website	www.kidscape.org.uk

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