



COTHERSTONE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-bullying Policy

July 2022
Review: 2024

Statement of Principle

The staff and governors of Cotherstone Primary School are committed to provide a safe, secure and positive environment in which children and young people can develop and flourish, making full use of the range of facilities available to them.

All children, young people and adults are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding, and to participate in any activity free from intimidation of any kind.

Our school is a place where every person has the right to be themselves, to be included and to learn in a safe and happy environment.

Aims

At Cotherstone Primary School we aim to:

- Develop an ethos in which bullying is unacceptable
- Put in place systems of identification and support to deal with bullying issues
- Create a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety
- Respond quickly and consistently to any bullying incidents
- Make all those connected with our school aware of our zero tolerance of bullying
- Make clear each person's responsibility with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school

Introduction

At Cotherstone Primary School we believe that every child has a right to:

- Receive respect from others and give respect to everyone
- Speak and be listened to
- Have the freedom to choose
- Be safe and secure

Bullying will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent occurrences of bullying and to play their part in dealing with incidents quickly and effectively. This policy has been updated in line with the Equality Act 2010

What is bullying?

Bullying can be described as any behaviour that is intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It is usually unprovoked, persistent and can continue for a long period of time.

The three main types of bullying are:

- Physical – this includes hitting, kicking, scratching and the taking or deliberate damaging of property
- Verbal – this includes name calling, making insulting or discriminatory remarks (racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, ageist or ableist), teasing, threats and extortion or sending nasty notes, text messages, emails and so on

Indirect – this includes ostracizing or the spreading of nasty stories about someone, and social exclusion of an individual

Racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic ageist or ableist harassment involves the same kind of behaviour directed against someone because of their culture or identity, their gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or disability. This can also be directed towards someone because of their association with someone with these characteristics: for example where a pupil has gay parents or a sibling with a disability.

Strategies for identifying bullying

Bullying can be difficult to identify because it is often subtle, covert and rarely witnessed by adults. However, there are warning signs.

Individual signs may include:

- Sudden mood swings
- Torn clothing and damaged books
- Loss of belongings
- Requests to be accompanied to and from school
- Bedwetting
- Nail biting
- Nervous tics
- Sleep walking
- Underachievement
- School refusal
- Physical marks
- Avoidance of certain days

Whole school signs may include:

- Graffiti
- Frequent name calling
- Poor attendance
- Pupils appearing to be afraid
- Social exclusion
- Pupils not willing to approach adults

Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer on Peer Abuse – including harmful sexual behaviour - is taken very seriously and all staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Education settings are an important part of the inter-agency framework not only in terms of evaluating and referring concerns to Children's Services and the Police, but also in the assessment and management of risk that the child or young person may pose to themselves and others in the education setting. If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse. When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or whether, the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or whether there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

In Cotherstone Primary School, peer on peer abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as 'joking around', 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

Peer on peer abuse may take different forms:

Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;

- Sexting 'Sexting in schools and colleges;
- Initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

We take a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence. We will ensure that all incidents of sexual harassment and/or violence are met with a suitable response, and never ignored. Pupils are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it might be.

Strategies for dealing with bullying

At Cotherstone Primary School there are five key principles that underpin our procedure for dealing with bullying:

- Never ignore suspected bullying
- Do not make assumptions
- Listen carefully to all accounts
- Adopt a problem-solving approach
- Follow up shortly after the intervention and some time after to check the bullying has not resumed.

As a school we take a proactive approach in promoting anti-bullying. During the second half of Autumn Term will participate in National Anti-Bullying Week. During this time, we have a whole-school focus on anti-bullying and usually follow the theme adopted by the Anti-Bullying Alliance. Recent themes have been 'Choose Respect' and 'Change starts with us'.

There are also times, throughout the year, where we welcome visitors who might offer support to victims of bullying for example Childline, Police and NSPCC.

It is difficult to draw up a list of procedures, as each case of bullying will be different. Teachers will from time to time use their own expertise and judgement as to what steps to take and how far to go with a particular incident.

The following procedures are merely guidelines. If there is bullying:

1. Find out both sides of the story in an attempt to see if it is really a case of bullying and not boisterous play.
2. Have a chat to the children involved, and give the alleged bully a 'verbal warning'.
3. Follow up a particular incident by observing the children involved. This will hopefully tell if it was just an isolated incident or if there is a pattern to the bullying behaviour.
4. If an incident happens at playtime, talk to the teachers on duty. If at lunchtime talk to the lunchtime supervisors.
5. It may be necessary to see the parents of both the victim and the bully. Explain the situation and ask both sets of parents for their co-operation.
6. If the bullying continues, a record needs to be made of 'proven' bullies and also of persistent victims. All staff need to be informed.

Working with parents and carers

At Cotherstone Primary School, we believe in the importance of working in partnership with parents. As such, we ensure that our staff understand the value in meeting and

communicating with parents regularly to discuss any concerns.

Parents should make contact with the class teacher initially whenever they have any concerns. The class teacher may decide to involve colleagues in any discussions depending on the nature of the concerns, e.g. SENCO for SEN.

When responding to parents, it is important to listen to and write down concerns raised. In order to prevent a misunderstanding, staff are encouraged to read back any concerns as they understand them. Parents should be reassured and have explained that an investigation will take place. Under no circumstances should a parent be informed of an outcome prior to the member of staff investigating the incident(s).

Roles and responsibilities

Staff

It is the collective responsibility of all staff members including lunchtime supervisors, admin staff, teaching assistants and teaching staff to:

- Report any concerns about incidents which could affect the health or wellbeing of anyone in the school to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher
 - Encourage and promote anti-bullying throughout the curriculum directly or indirectly
 - Listen to any child or parent that has any concerns including those related to bullying incidents
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- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy when dealing with any suspected incidents of bullying

Senior Leadership Team

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team to:

- Ensure that the anti-bullying policy is implemented in school and shared with all stakeholders
- Promote anti-bullying in various ways, e.g. through timetabled assemblies, through conversations with children and through display work
- Report to the Governing Body, as necessary, on any bullying issues
- Liaise with the Local Authority, as necessary, if a period of fixed term or permanent exclusion is required
- Support staff in dealing with bullying incidents and meet with parents as necessary to support the actions of staff members
- Keep accurate records of all bullying incidents

Governors

The Governing Body will:

- Support the Head Teacher in attempts to eliminate bullying from Cotherstone Primary School
- Monitor any incidents of bullying that occur and review the effectiveness of this policy through discussion at Governing Body meetings

Parents/Carers

The parents/carers will:

- Raise any concerns that they may have with their child's class teacher

- Support the actions of the school when carrying out investigations/dealing with any incidents
- Promote the anti-bullying work that the school does by sharing in conversations about this at home

Children

The children will:

- Treat others with courtesy and respect at all times
- Not bully another person in any way
- Respect the differences between themselves and others
- Talk to an adult immediately if they are worried about bullying

Monitoring and review

The Anti-Bullying Policy is reviewed every two years through consultation with all stakeholders. The Headteacher monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis and reports to the Governing Body as appropriate, including making any recommendations for improvement.

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