



HIGHGATE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

April 2024

To go against the dominant thinking of your friends, of most of the people you see every day,
is perhaps the most difficult act of heroism you can perform.

Theodore H. White

This policy should be read in conjunction with both the school's Behaviour Policy and Exclusions Policy.

Introduction

Persistent bullying can inhibit a child's ability to learn effectively and a member of staff's ability to do their job well. The negative effects of bullying can have an impact on a person for their entire life. Highgate Primary School wishes to promote an environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.

Aims:

- To ensure that all members of the school community have an understanding of what bullying is.
- To create an atmosphere and environment where children, parents and staff feel able to tell the school about bullying if it arises, and are confident that it will be taken seriously and dealt with.
- To put in place clear procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying.

Bullying: A Definition

Bullying is a sustained pattern of aggression by a person with more power, targeting someone with less power. The key is that it is repeated; intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally; and may be aimed at certain groups, e.g. because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Bullying can take many forms and causes pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can have some or all of the following characteristics:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, unwanted physical contact
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Written: graffiti, notes etc (on walls, doors etc or in books, pencils cases, clothes or online)

Types of bullying can be homophobic, sexual, racial, or aimed at a person's disability or gender. These types of bullying are typically expressed through taunts, gestures, mimicking, joking, graffiti and focussing on someone's difference.

All these forms of bullying are unacceptable.

Whilst bullying is usually understood to occur repeatedly over time, there can sometimes be single acts of bullying taking place as isolated incidents.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

An individual may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. All members of the school community should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate where someone:

- Is unwilling to go to school
- Is frightened of going to school alone (if they usually do in upper KS2)
- Changes their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Wets the bed
- Runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do less well in school work
- Comes home with torn clothes or books or other possessions missing
- Asks for money or steals money
- Has dinner or other money continually lost
- Has unexplained injuries
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Loses appetite
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

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

Understanding bullying

The school curriculum supports children to better understand the dynamics involved with bullying, including the active role they can play in reducing its prevalence and impact. Emphasis is placed on the importance of sharing concerns whenever they are encountered or witnessed. The school is clear that not reporting incidents of bullying when they are observed is to collude with the perpetrator.

Procedures for reporting incidents of bullying

Parents and children are encouraged and supported to inform the school when it is suspected that there have been ongoing incidents of bullying and/or individual acts of aggression, rejection or unkind behaviour.

When a member of the school community reports an occurrence of bullying, the following procedures are followed:

- Listen to the individual and record their concern
- Let the individual see that the matter is being taken seriously
- Tell the individual how you intend to follow this up
- Carry out an investigation into the incident
- Talk to the person who is being bullied and ask them to describe the behaviour that has been experienced
- Talk to the perpetrator(s)
- Take witness statements

Action following a confirmed incidence of bullying

Where there has been an occurrence of bullying in school, which staff have either witnessed or has been substantiated following investigation, the following action should be taken:

- The headteacher is informed
- The incident is recorded in writing
- A copy of the report is kept in the child's file
- The victim is made aware that appropriate action is taking place
- The headteacher meets with the perpetrator, making it absolutely clear that the bullying behaviour must stop
- The headteacher meets the parents of the perpetrator
- The parents of the victim are seen by the classteacher or headteacher
- Parents are informed what action has been taken by the school
- A consequence is agreed (the consequences of the bullying will depend on the seriousness of the event and the child's behavioural history and may include: missing playtimes, letters/cards of apology, internal exclusion from peer group, fixed term exclusion, permanent exclusion)
- The school's inclusion team reports all incidents of bullying to the Governors' Safeguarding Committee

In addition, and where appropriate:

- Other members of staff are informed including class teacher, education support staff and SMSAs
- Arrange for a special relationship with a member of staff as necessary

Links to other policy documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Exclusions Policy

Staff Responsible

William Dean: Headteacher

Emma Judge: Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is available on the school website and a copy of this policy will be available to all members of the school community through the school office.

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Governors' Safeguarding Committee.