

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Responsibility for Document:	HT/SLT
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INTRODUCTION

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Mission Statement and Teaching and Learning Policy as together they establish the general ethos of the school. Please also refer to the Home/School Agreement, and our policies on Positive Behaviour Policy, Special Educational Needs, Personal Development Learning Policy and the Governors Statement: Behaviour Principles.

At Denmead Junior we strive to create a growth mind-set for learning and life for all our children by using growth mind-set language and behaviours. This encompasses all interactions, between pupils and staff, amongst staff and amongst pupils. In addition, we promote the Learning Skills of Resilience, resourcefulness, reflection and reciprocity. In everything that we strive to do and the way that we do it, we promote, model and teach the children the values of Friendship, Understanding and PRIDE (Preparedness, Respect, Inspiration, Determination and Excellence).

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for responding to incidents involving bullying consistently and promptly.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

It is important to have an 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'

Bullying has these common features:

- It is a 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:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, racist remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups
- Uses of new technology e.g mobile phones, internet

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

Bullying causes misery, fear, stress and insecurity to the victim and is unacceptable behaviour in our school community. It is important to recognise that there is a distinction between bullying and the more commonplace arguments between children or friendship issues, using the principles above.

The school regards instances of bullying as a serious matter. We recognise that bullying happens in all schools and we try to encourage children to speak out when confronted with a problem, either to a friend, a parent, or a member of staff. The teachers are also alert to signs of a child being unhappy and may talk sensitively to the child if suspicious.

AIMS

At Denmead Junior School we aim to:

- Provide a safe and happy learning environment for all children
- Show that we have 'zero tolerance to bullying' by responding to and investigating fully any case of bullying immediately and consistently
- Make the prevention of bullying a high priority within the school with a clear commitment from the Head Teacher, governors and all school staff
- Use the school curriculum to raise awareness of bullying
- Take part in the annual national Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Encourage a culture in school where it is fully accepted that children and adults tell staff of any bullying behaviours

Amongst children we aim to:

- Develop a respect for themselves and others, so that all feel safe and secure
- Encourage behaviour that supports their own learning and that of others
- Develop tolerance and understanding of the rights, differences and views of others
- Develop a respect for their property and that of others
- Develop appropriate and relevant social skills
- Develop the language and skills to solve their problems calmly, openly and with understanding
- Encourage the child to take responsibility for the consequences of their actions and choices
- Create and encourage a code of conduct based on Values Education which will act as a model beyond the school
- Promote Restorative Justice approaches to investigate and resolve behaviour incidents between children

PRINCIPLES

It is important that all staff agree on the aims and objectives of such a policy and know what to do when an incident of bullying is reported.

We will:

- Monitor children about whom we are particularly concerned
- Constantly review supervision levels throughout the school day
- Investigate every reported incident of bullying and take prompt and appropriate action
- Listen carefully to all those involved to determine an accurate picture of events
- Ascertain the possible reasons behind the bullying incidents, taking appropriate action against the bully and reassuring the victim
- Consult and work with professionals from other agencies
- Work with parents and carers

SANCTIONS

Sanctions are used where bullying behaviour is clearly proven. Sanctions are tailored to respond to the incidents and the children involved, after discussion with the parents. These will include:

- Loss of privileges e.g. playtimes, lunchtimes, after school clubs, representation of the school, loss of school council/house captain positions
- In more serious cases, a pupil may be temporarily or permanently excluded.

Work is also undertaken with the person displaying the bullying behaviours e.g. anger management to help them change their behaviours. Work is also undertaken with the person experiencing bullying with strategies to help them become more assertive.

APPENDICES

1. **Dealing with bullying – School strategy**
2. **Information for parents**
3. **Information for children**

APPENDIX 1. DEALING WITH BULLYING: School Strategy

If parents find a problem, the school encourages them to share their thoughts. The school also needs to be informed of incidents outside school which may affect relationships during the school day. It is a fact that 50% of bullying is not reported. To encourage a culture of openness, our school has an open-door policy and adults are available and accessible for pupils to talk to informally at planned times across the school day e.g. before break times. Proactive elements are also planned into the curriculum, equipping pupils with a variety of skills to deal with such situations, e.g. through assemblies, PDL lessons, circle time and special weeks e.g. Anti-bullying week.

We teach our pupils that all children have the right to:

- Be physically safe.
- Keep their own possessions.
- Be free of insult, derogatory terms and teasing.
- Be able to associate with others for companionship and friendship by choice.

A child experiencing the bullying can find it difficult to "stand up for themselves." Advice to "hit back" or "turn away" will not work and their misery is made worse with each failure. In the long term these children need a social skills programme in order to help them form relationships. When identified these are actively planned for individuals and through PSHCE and Social Skills/Circles of Friends.

What do we do if it happens?

The traditional method has been to punish the person displaying bullying behaviours. Research shows that this person can feel more aggrieved and therefore seeks revenge on the other child. It therefore becomes even less likely that the child experiencing bullying will report any further incidents, and they will not feel more secure. It is necessary to work with the child/ren displaying bullying behaviours positively in order to change their behaviour in a way that makes them feel less inadequate while making the life of the other child more secure. However, it is imperative that the child/ren displaying bullying behaviours is made to be aware of the sanctions and impact of his/her behaviour choices.

As with all life situations, there is no one way of dealing with these issues and teachers use their extensive knowledge of our pupils and their professional judgement in reaching resolution. In all cases of bullying it is important that the wishes of the child experiencing bullying are considered in reaching a resolution. The ultimate aim is to stop future occurrences and enable the child to feel secure.

The following method is our "step by step" guide to investigating and resolving conflict. All incidents of bullying are recorded by class teachers in their behaviour log books.

A STRATEGY FOR DEALING FAIRLY WITH CHILDREN EXPERIENCING BULLYING AND THOSE DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

Step one – Gathering Information

The adult that the child has spoken to will encourage the child to talk about the experience, making notes and being clear of the facts, particularly who was involved and any eyewitnesses who may have seen an event. If this adult is not the class teacher, they will discuss the concern with the class teacher who will continue to deal with the incident, logging all information in a class book which is handed on to the next year group as children move through the school. The teacher will want to talk to the person displaying bullying behaviours too. In situations where extreme, violent or persistent bullying occurs the issue would be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher immediately.

Step two – Meeting A

The teacher would convene a meeting with the people named (without the child experiencing bullying). The teacher arranges a meeting with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. The Teacher will listen to their views and establish what was seen and heard. They will then consider the information, usually discussing with Senior Teacher or Head Teacher.

Step three – Meeting B

The Teacher will convene a meeting with the people named and the child experiencing bullying. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. It is often useful for the child experiencing bullying to have support from a friend or an eyewitness. The teacher tells them about the way the child is feeling and describes the incident as it occurred from accounts. An agreement is reached about what happened. (In class during PDL – the teacher should use a poem, piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise the effects and impact of bullying generally. At no time does the teacher discuss names, the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.)

Step four - Shared responsibility.

The teacher does not attribute blame but states that they know that the group/individual are/is responsible for their behaviour and the consequences and can do something about it. The group/individual should understand that what has been happening is unacceptable. They should be asked to explain why it is unacceptable and to discuss other options and choices they could have taken. They will also discuss the school sanction system and what should happen next. Members of the group are encouraged to suggest a way in which the child experiencing bullying could be helped to feel happier. The teacher gives some positive responses but does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step five – Time for Self-responsibility and Resolution

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. The teacher then arranges to meet with them again (about a week later) to see how things are going. The Teacher will also ask the Midday Supervisors to watch closely during play/lunches and in, extreme cases, the names of pupils will be added to the weekly Childwatch board so that all staff are aware that these pupils may need support and guidance and any subsequent incident can be responded to quickly.

Step six – Informing parents.

When an incident has been dealt with and a resolution reached, Teachers will inform parents, detailing the incidents, strategies used to find resolution and offer feedback the following week. They will also offer support for parents in encouraging their child to make the right choices (children displaying bullying behaviours) and to be more assertive in applying strategies learnt (for children experiencing bullying). Both sets of parents will understand that the incident has been taken seriously and has been logged with the Head Teacher, even if he/she has not dealt with it directly.

Step seven - Meet again

About a week later the teacher discusses with each pupil individually, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the young people involved in the process. He/she will also have received feedback from other staff.

APPENDIX 2. Information for Parents/Carers and Families

All schools are likely to have some problems with bullying at one time or another. At Denmead Junior School our aim is to prevent bullying.

What is bullying?

Bullying is:

- deliberately hurtful behaviour
- repeated often over a period of time
- difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
- where the bully has power over the victim

Bullying can take many forms:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, racist remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups
- May use new technology e.g. mobile phones, internet

Parents, carers 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 situations without using violence or aggression.

Second, watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents, carers 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 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 teacher to discuss the problems that your child is experiencing

Talking with teachers about bullying

- Try to 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 the children involved
- Note 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

If your child is bullying other children

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

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They don't know it's wrong
- They copy older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they may admire
- They haven't learned 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 power to get what they want
- Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying
- Make an urgent 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 co-operative or kind to other people

APPENDIX 3. Information for Children**What is bullying?**

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If you see bullying by other children, you are allowing it to continue if you do not tell. You have a responsibility to take steps to stop this unacceptable behaviour. So:

- Tell a teacher or another adult in 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
- Keep on speaking up until someone listens

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

Afterwards:

- Tell a teacher or another adult in 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
- Keep on speaking up until someone listens
- 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