Fringford C of E Primary School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

At Fringford C of E Primary School we firmly believe that every child in our care has the right to feel safe, secure and happy in school and in all school activities. We recognise the seriousness of all forms of bullying and the deeply damaging impact it can have on those involved. We recognise the value of talking about bullying and of equipping children with strategies for dealing with bullying should they encounter it.

Aims of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, children and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- 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 children 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. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is:

- behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally.
- deliberately hurtful.
- on-going (it is not the same as random unprovoked aggressive acts).
- unequal and difficult to counteract by the person being bullied (it involves a power imbalance – this can result from size, number, status or as a result of having access to limited resources).
- indirect or direct
    - physical (e.g. hitting or kicking)
    - verbal (e.g. abuse or name-calling)
    - non-verbal (e.g. gestures and looks)
    - psychological (e.g. excluding or threats)

Bullying includes: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, inappropriate text messaging and emailing, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

We recognise the specific guises and problems associated with cyber-bullying and teach our children how to stay safe online. We provide information for parents on the nature and risks of cyber-bullying and on how to help protect and inform their children.

The school takes reported incidents of all types of bullying seriously. These include bullying

on the grounds of race, gender, religion, SEN, disabilities, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist and sexual, along with the use of discriminatory language, name calling and cyberbullying. This may also include bullying which has taken place outside school grounds and school hours. We are committed to ensuring that all incidents are dealt with promptly and effectively.

Forms of bullying covered by this policy

People are bullied for a variety of reasons. Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to special educational needs
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- bullying related to sexual orientation
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying
- cyber-bullying

There is no hierarchy of bullying and no form of bullying is tolerated at Fringford C of E Primary School. We are a **TELLING** school: we encourage and support all members of our school community to report bullying and are committed to finding solutions that work.

Possible 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 frightened of walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- begins stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has distressing nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating

- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

Our Whole School Approach

The Fringford C of E Primary School approach to tackling bullying is both preventative and reactive.

We use the SCARF Programme of Study approach to develop self-awareness, personal management of feelings, motivation, empathy and social skills in all our children. We actively teach children strategies for developing behavioural skills which create positive relationships and the necessary skills for identifying and coping with potential bullying behaviour. Our work focuses specifically on the bullying that sometimes happens between children, on the feelings involved and on the varied roles that people take on within bullying situations; the person(s) displaying bullying behaviour, the person(s) being bullied and the 'witnesses' or by-standers.

Our whole school ethos both within and outside of classrooms is one based on respect and consideration for all, listening to our own and others' feelings, and a strong behavioural code developed and continually reviewed by our whole school community.

As a school community we understand that there are different roles within bullying. We discuss these roles with our children. We also understand that the same child can adopt different roles at different times, or indeed at the same time.

- The ring-leader, the person who through their social power can direct bullying activity.
- Assistants/associates who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader).
- Re-enforcers who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing.
- Outsiders/bystanders who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour.
- Defenders who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort children who experience bullying.

Identifying and responding to bullying

We:

- carefully select appropriate strategies and external support where this is needed.
- are pro-active in early identification of pupils who may be at risk.
- use data e.g. deteriorating attendance, poor punctuality, lack of progress and diminishing achievement as potential indicators of vulnerability to, or suffering from bullying.
- consider emotional, behavioural and physical problems as potential signs of bullying.

- consider opportunities for addressing bullying through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support, through Anti-Bullying week and through the School Council.
- train all staff to identify bullying and follow anti-bullying policy and procedures.

Dealing with bullying incidents

For children who experience bullying behaviour

Children are encouraged to report bullying behaviour to a trusted adult. This could be their class teacher, the nearest adult, a teaching assistant or the Headteacher.
Next steps could include the following where appropriate:

- Immediate steps to ensure they feel safe again
- A meeting between the child's teacher and/or Headteacher and the child's parents to discuss what has happened and agree a programme of support (follow-up discussions planned).
- Support with a teaching assistant - 1:1 discussion and activities to rebuild self-esteem, confidence and resilience.
- Individual/small group work to practise positive strategies that might reduce the occurrence of bullying.

For children who engage in bullying behaviour

- Sanctions and learning programmes hold them to account for their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm they have caused.

- Persistent bullying behaviour will result in a meeting between the Headteacher and parents to discuss what has happened and agree a programme of support (follow-up discussions planned).
- A discussion with class teacher about what has happened, with an aim of establishing fact and potential reasons for bullying behaviour.
- Individual/small group work to reflect on their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm their behaviour may have caused, to support the development of social and emotional skills and behaviour and/or to learn the steps they need to take to repair the harm they have caused and ensure they can make a choice to avoid bullying behaviour in the future.

For parents / carers

We provide:

- assurance that Fringford C of E Primary School does not tolerate bullying and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in a way that protects their child.
- clear communication from school about the activities and programmes undertaken with their child.
- awareness of the procedures to use if they are concerned their child is being bullied or engaged in bullying behaviour.
- information to parents of incidents of bullying and accusations of bullying at the earliest opportunity.

- information to ensure that parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively and know where to access independent advice about bullying.

As a school:

- the whole school community is clear about the anti-bullying stance the school takes;
- the school works with parents to resolve bullying issues;
- pupils, as well as staff and other members of the school, are fully engaged in developing and reviewing anti-bullying work in the school;
- every chance is taken to celebrate a happy and cohesive community spirit;
- all pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying, including the role of bystanders.

Involvement of children

We:

- canvas children's views on the extent and nature of bullying through school council, lessons and regular pupil feedback sessions.
- ensure children know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- involve all children in on-going anti-bullying awareness and campaigns in schools.
- involve all children in reviewing and developing anti-bullying work and policy.
- publicise the details of helplines and websites.
- offer support to children who have been bullied.
- work with children who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have.

Contact with the school by parents/carers

The school encourages parents/carers to speak to their child's class teacher in the first instance, if they have any concerns relating to bullying behaviours or bullying incidents. Alternatively, parents may prefer to inform the Headteacher. All staff within the school are used to dealing with confidential and sensitive issues, and all incidents are referred to the Headteacher for advice, recording and follow-up if necessary.

Recording

All incidents of bullying are recorded as this enables the school to:

- manage individual cases effectively;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies;
- celebrate the anti-bullying work of the school;
- engage and inform multi-agency teams as necessary.

In the case of a bullying incident the school informs the parents of all parties at the earliest

appropriate opportunity, either in person or by telephone.

Safeguarding

This policy is part of our commitment to safeguarding children. It should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection. Bullying is a safeguarding matter and if left unresolved can become a child protection matter.

Monitoring and Review

We will review this policy at least once every three years, more often if there is an identified need to do so. Children, staff and the school council will be involved in reviewing and developing on-going anti-bullying work.