

NEWBOLD SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date of this review: December, 2021, by Mrs J Crissey (Headteacher)

Ratified by Newbold School Board of Governors, Spring Term 2022.

Next review December 2023

Definition of bullying: There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated over time (not just a once-off incident)
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Guidance for Staff

- Staff must be aware of the policy on bullying
- All staff must challenge any bullying behaviour. This will include sexist, racist or homophobic behaviour.
- Staff must be aware that verbal behaviour, as well as physical, can be intimidating
- All staff must be diligent in reporting incidents – even apparent isolated incidents
- Incidents must be dealt with fairly and promptly
- When investigating an incident of bullying accusations, staff must be aware that this may not be the underlying cause of this incident.
- Separately, pupils must each be given the opportunity to present their version of events.
- Teachers need to be aware of whether the bullying is by an individual or a group of pupils
- A note must be made in the incident log book of any incident observed.
- Staff must not walk past any incident and leave it unchallenged.
- Teachers must follow agreed procedures for dealing with bullying incidents.
- Class teachers and school staff need to discuss the implementation of the anti-bullying policy annually.

Bullying – Possible signs

Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Parents should not dismiss it and should contact the school immediately if they are worried. The child may indicate signs or behaviours that he or she is being bullied. The following signs are indicators of bullying and parents who notice these signs and are worried should contact the class teacher first, who will inform Mrs Crissey (headteacher).

A bullied child may:

- Be frightened of walking to or from school
- Be unwilling to go to school
- Beg you to drive them to school
- Change their route to school
- Begin doing poorly in their school work
- Come home early or regularly with clothes or books destroyed
- Become stressed
- Stop eating.
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches and cuts
- Have their possessions go 'missing'
- Ask for money or begin stealing money (to pay bully)
- Continually lose their pocket money
- Refuse to say what is wrong.

Advice for Parents to talk 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 may have 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 other children involved.

Make a note of 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; let them know if things improve or if problems continue.

Guidance for Parents

No child deserves to be bullied. As well as dealing with the victims of bullying, we also have a responsibility to help the bullies to improve their behaviour and attitudes; ignoring a bully's behaviour can be detrimental to the development of their mental health and their ability to function normally in society as an adult. Equally so, their actions as a bully can have a detrimental effect on their victim's mental health and self esteem. Our aim is to encourage a zero-tolerance attitude to bullying and to actively seek ways of preventing it and stopping it as early as possible once signs are apparent.

How parents can help

- If your child is experiencing bullying then reassure her/him that s/he has done the right thing in telling you about the bullying.

- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur s/he should report them to a teacher immediately.
- If you are worried that your child is being bullied, ask her/him directly.
- Take bullying seriously and find out the facts when told about an incident of bullying.
- Don't agree to keep the bullying a secret
- Give your child a chance to vent her/his feelings about being bullied
- Check that your child is not saying unkind things which may upset others and cause them to react.
- Keep a written diary of all events
- Talk with a teacher or Head teacher if the bullying takes place in school or by school pupils out of school.

If you are not satisfied

Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by the school, might like to consider the following steps:

- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the class teacher and keep a record of the meeting.
- If this does not help, write to the Head teacher explaining your concerns and what you would like to see happening
- Contact local or national parent support groups for advice

If your` child is the bully

First of all discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

Sometimes children bully others because:

- They do not know that it is wrong.
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire.
- They have not learnt 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 their aggressive feelings.

To assist in stopping your child from bullying others, talk with your child and explain that what s/he is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy. Discuss any or all of the above situations that may be the cause and try to work through these with your child.

ANTI – BULLYING CONTRACT

At Newbold School, we acknowledge that no school is free of bullying. We as a school will strive to create an environment that is happy and supportive of all our pupils and staff.

In order to have the full commitment of every member of our community for our anti-bullying policy we will ask everyone to sign this contract. This will help to ensure that bullying is kept to a minimum, if not eradicated altogether.

Pupils promise to:

Support the aims of the school by reporting all incidents of bullying whether directed towards them or someone else.

Parents / Carers undertake to:

Support the aims of the school by watching for signs of bullying and communicate these to the school.

Staff undertake to:

Investigate all reported or observed incidents and take the appropriate actions.

Pupil's Name: _____

Pupil's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's / Carer's Name: _____

Parent's / Career's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Teacher's signature: _____ Date: _____

GUIDELINES ON DEALING WITH BULLYING

1. DEFINITIONS AND GENERAL COMMENTS

Bullying is intimidation, whether verbal or physical, which causes physical, mental or emotional distress to a victim who is not able to defend himself / herself.

Bullying exists in all schools to a greater or lesser degree and is one of children's main concerns.

Boys are more likely to use physical bullying and girls verbal. Studies show that most bullies and victims have low self-confidence and self-esteem.

Bullying is to be taken seriously and schools should have a policy on the handling of bullying. This document is a recommended policy; schools may wish to add to these guidelines to meet their particular situations.

2. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

The following preventative measures are recommended to schools:

- a) The administration and teachers should emphasize each child's individual value in the eyes of God and the school.
- b) The staff should create an atmosphere of concern and trust so that children feel they can share problems and worries with staff.
- c) The administration should address the issue early in the school year in an assembly. The following should be included:
 - i. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable behaviour and will not be tolerated in the school.
 - ii. Encourage the children to report incidents of bullying as soon as possible after they happen. Emphasize that this is responsible behaviour and not "telling tales".
 - iii. Teach the children to feel responsible for each other's safety. Help them to grasp the principle that there are no bystanders in bullying.
- d) The administration should ensure adequate supervision of the children at all times. If some areas of the school cannot be supervised at all times, spot-checks are helpful.
- e) Teachers should discuss bullying in class. Teach the children how to react to being bullied. (This is especially important in Year 6 to help prepare children for secondary school).
- f) All staff should be aware of the effects of "teachers-bullying". All pupils should be treated with a level of respect. No one should humiliate a child by making jokes at his/her expense.

3. SIGNS OF BULLYING

Staff should also watch for signs that a child is being bullied. These include:

- a) Fear of walking to or from school.
- b) Deterioration in school work
- c) A child becoming withdrawn or starting to stammer
- d) Unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts, etc.
- e) Unexplained loss of possessions or money
- f) Unexplained damage to a child's books or clothes
- g) A child refusing to say what is wrong or giving improbable excuses to explain any of the above.

4. DEALING WITH BULLYING INCIDENTS

In the case of a bullying incident staff are advised to deal with the situation as follows:

- a) If the bully is caught in the act, remove the victim from the scene as quickly as possible and tell the bully that he/she will be spoken with later. Don't be aggressive and don't intervene physically unless absolutely necessary.
- b) If a victim reports an incident to you, take it seriously and assure him/her that the matter will be dealt with swiftly. Ask for a written report (child's age permitting).

In both cases the following procedure should be implemented:

- a) Take the matter to the head or senior teacher who should deal with it as soon as possible. Early intervention is important: failure to deal with the bully promotes further aggression.
- b) The parents of both victim and bully should be involved. Invite them to attend any interviews with their child. If this is not possible, inform them of all discussions and decisions.
- c) The victim and the bully should be interviewed separately and then together.
- d) A record of all incidents and subsequent actions taken must be kept.

5. HOW TO DEAL WITH THE BULLY: SUGGESTIONS

- a) Help the bully to understand that his/her behaviour is not acceptable.
- b) Make the bully aware of the distress caused to the victim.
- c) Explore reasons for the bullying and ways to help the bully control his/her aggression. Help to find something he/she can do well which can foster his/her self-esteem. If the problem is deep-seated, outside help from a child psychologist may be required.
- d) Punish the bully, record the punishment and show the bully it has been recorded. Punishments should not involve aggression or humiliation.
- e) The bully should make amends for the distress caused i.e. an apology (public, private or in writing) a gift or special favour to the victim (any such contact should be with the victim's permission).
- f) An identified bully should be supervised very closely.

6. GUIDANCE FOR VICTIM

If you are being bullied try to respond in at least one of these ways:

- a) You will be upset and bullies like to see this so try not to show them that you are.
- b) Try not to react too much to the bully at the time, but make sure you can tell someone as soon as possible.
- c) Walk away quickly and confidently even if you do not feel that way inside.
- d) Try to be assertive – look and sound confident.
- e) If you are different in any way, be proud of it – it's good to be you (special).
- f) Avoid being alone in places where bullying happens.
- g) If you are in danger, get away fast.
- h) You must tell a teacher if someone bullies you or makes your life unhappy.
- i) If possible try to avoid the bully.
- j) Try not to retaliate.

7. SUPPORT FOR BULLIES AND VICTIMS

- a) It should be made clear to everyone in the school that they have the right to attend school without fear of being bullied.
- b) There should be frequent open class discussions around bullying.
- c) Pupils who take pride in their 'macho' image must be made to confront the reason for their bullying behaviour.
- d) There should be regular meetings where bullies and victims may meet separately or together to work through their problems with staff (within the circle-time group setting perhaps).
- e) Clear and explicit rules and corresponding courses of action must be agreed upon by all staff, pupils and parent representatives. Teachers to meet and discuss agreed procedures.
- f) Pupils will be encouraged to write their concerns on paper and hand it in to the class teacher.
- g) There should be an assembly on bullying once per term, Constructive supervision – having a chat with pupils while on duty, etc. can help the victims and the bully.

8. HOW TO HELP THE VICTIM: SUGGESTIONS

- a) If a child reports an incident, never brush it aside. Take all reports seriously.
- b) Help the victim to see that what has happened is not his/her fault and he/she is not to blame. (Victims often feel that they are in some way responsible or that there is something wrong with them).

PUBLICATIONS:

- *Elliott, Michele, Teenscape: A Personal Safety Programme for Teenagers (1990).*

- Elliott, Michele, *Keeping Safe: A Practical Guide to Talking with Children* (1988).
- Other material, including the free 20 page leaflet **Stop Bullying** is available from Kidscape,
World Trade Centre, Europe House, LONDON E1 9AA.