

Meltham CE (C) School



Anti-Bullying Policy

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1.0 Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- to define bullying
- to set out a strategy to discourage and prevent bullying
- to enable bullying to be recognised when it does occur
- to allow bullying to be dealt with effectively

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the school community are expected to be vigilant for signs of bullying, to report bullying and to respond to bullying in accordance with this policy.

3.0 Policy

At Meltham CE Primary School we recognise that bullying can occur, but the aims and rights of our school make it clear that bullying is always unacceptable. We take bullying seriously and everyone should be assured that they will be fully supported when bullying is reported.

Where bullying does happen we aim to teach bullies how to act differently and to develop empathy, conscience and self-control.

The school has many strategies that promote positive behaviour, this pro-active approach creates a culture where bullying is unacceptable. The school has:

- a positive behaviour policy that all pupils understand
- A Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum that includes teaching about relationships
- Good relationships between staff, parents and children
- A clear focus on Christian Values
- A strong supportive ethos

3.1 Definition of bullying

Meltham CE defines bullying as:

‘A pattern of repeated negative behaviour directed from an individual or group, towards another individual or group where there is an imbalance of power.’

Bullying behaviour always has three components: cruel, or negative actions; repeated aggression and imbalance of power. Bullying is always unacceptable but not all unacceptable behaviour is bullying.

It can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, spreading rumors or tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures, intimidation)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal -name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, graffiti, ridiculing, vicious comments
- Cyber - all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology , e.g camera & video/ webcam facilities
- Sexual - sexual abuse, unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or misogynistic comments
- Theft or damage to property

It *may* be (but not exclusively) in relation to

- Race
- Perceived socio-economic status
- Sex
- Sexuality i.e. *homophobic or transphobic*
- Disability or perceived ability

- Faith
- Physical differences - spectacles, hair colour, presentation including clothing, height or weight

It is important to recognise that bullying may also occur for no apparent reason other than for the bully to experience a feeling of power.

3.1.1. What bullying is not?

Bullying is not the single or occasional incidents of name-calling, pushing or falling-out between friends and peers. Neither is bullying an isolated fight or an aggressive incident following a disagreement in the playground or during a football match or a game. Bullying is not overly-physical play becoming aggressive. This type of behaviour is unacceptable to the school, but would not typically be classed as bullying and falls under the remit of the Positive Behaviour Policy.

3.2 Why do we tackle bullying?

We tackle bullying as an issue because we aim to create a safe and secure environment where all pupils feel a sense of belonging and well-being. In addition, bullying contravenes the rights that are agreed in the school. All pupils and staff are aware of the rights in school. These are non-negotiable and common throughout the school:

- Everybody has a right to be safe.
- Children have a right to learn and teachers to teach.
- Everybody should be treated with respect and dignity.
- Property should be respected.

3.3 Vulnerable Pupils

The school takes a pro-active approach to identifying vulnerable pupils as this can prevent bullying before it starts. This in no way condones the bullying behaviour as acceptable; everyone has a right not to be bullied, harassed, assaulted or abused. People who are targeted by bullies often have integrity, are respectful, non-violent people who will go to great lengths to resolve conflict by dialogue, unaware that this does not work with bullies.

Recognising pupils who may exhibit bullying characteristics is also important. Bullies can often be emotionally immature and may therefore compensate for this weakness with intimidation or aggression. They may have no thought or understanding for the consequences of their behavior, but also be manipulative and able to provide many excuses and justification for it.

Bullies are often surrounded by other children. Sometimes this is not through popularity, but through fear of repercussion, or the wider need of children, to be accepted into a perceived popular circle. The bully may find it difficult to sustain a friendship which is based on trust, dependability, loyalty and mutual respect, but instead may form a group, gang or clique as part of their need for power and control. Some children side with the bully because they gain sufficient bravado to act like bullies themselves, but most children side with the bully for fear of otherwise

becoming a target. Those children who do not join the gang or clique are then targeted by the bullies who gain additional power from numbers.

3.4 Prevention

The School employs many strategies to prevent bullying occurring:

- School staff proactively monitor issues between pupils which might provoke conflict
- The school gathers data by carrying out pupil and parent surveys
- An Anti-bullying week in November each year to reinforce the message that bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- Classes use circle-time and stories with themes and morals as well as the broader PSHE curriculum which focuses heavily on relationships and identifying how to be constructive and empathetic friends.
- Bullying is discussed throughout the school including teaching the language of bullying (ringleaders, colluders, bystanders)
- The termly reinforcement of the behaviour policy which includes defining 'respect' and 'dignity'.
- Playground champions system of peer-mentoring and Year 6/Reception buddying system.
- Assertiveness teaching - everyone has the right not to be bullied
- School regularly shares tips on combating online bullying with parents and teaches children about the types and effects of cyber bullying each year.

3.5 Reporting Bullying

Bullying can only be dealt with effectively if the school knows that it is happening. We encourage everyone to report any form of bullying or potential bullying and we have strategies to help this to happen:

- Poster reminders around school changed termly
- Ethos that ensures availability of all staff to listen
- Access to the school's Learning Mentor and Senior ETA
- Availability of classroom teachers for contact by parents is promoted by published e-mails on the school's website

3.6 Responding to Bullying

We expect everyone in the school community to know how to respond when they witness bullying. It is everyone's responsibility to report bullying when it occurs.

The school ensures that pupils are empowered to stop bullying and teaches bystanders how to safely intercede to prevent a bullying situation occurring. We teach that bullying should never be ignored. Once it is reported the school takes a stepped approach, based on the degree of intent and frequency that mirrors the series of consequences in the school's positive behaviour policy.

The class teacher or lunchtime supervisors provide the initial response to complaints of bullying. They will use a 'no blame' approach, although this does not equate to 'no accountability' and the bully is always held responsible for their actions. Care is taken to ensure that the bully cannot manipulate the situation and attempt to reflect accountability back onto the accuser and to plausibly portray the target as the guilty party.

- The target and the perpetrator are usually seen separately.
- The perpetrator is given an opportunity to resolve the situation and to acknowledge that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Possible reasons for the bullying are investigated (does the bully have poor anger management, lack of social skills, lack empathy or want power?) This may result in the development of an Individual Behaviour Plan for that child.
- A review is held one week later with regular contact with the target in between
- The incident is logged on Integris G2 Behaviour module
- Head teacher and class teacher informed immediately and whole staff team are informed at a staff communication meeting.
- If there is no resolution after one week the issue is escalated to the head teacher.

The head teacher will be aware of the situation and discuss the issue with the target and perpetrator separately.

- The incident is logged on Integris Behaviour module.
- Possible involvement of parents made clear to perpetrator at this point.
- Review held in one week after initial meeting, with regular contact with victim in between.
- If no resolution in one week parents *may* be contacted.
- The parents would be invited to discuss the bullying behaviour and possible consequences in line with the school behaviour policy with the Head teacher.
- Persistent bullies will be closely monitored or supervised - in some circumstances, fixed-term exclusion from school may be considered.

Every incident of bullying is different and some may require a different response to that detailed above. The school will always give the bully a chance to change his/her behaviour before parents are contacted.

It is often difficult to confirm that bullying is taking place and that the incident is not a disagreement between two people of equal power. It is essential that the repeated nature of the behaviour is also confirmed. This requires full investigation at stage 1 and hence it may be necessary for this stage to last longer.

3.7 Resolution and the rights of the bully

It is also important to recognise that the bully has the right to make amends for, and to put right, behaviours that have been identified as bullying in line with the school's Christian ethos. We recognise that children who exhibit bullying behaviours may be experiencing difficulties themselves or have been the target of bullying in the past. This in no way will be deemed to

excuse a bully's actions, but Meltham CE stresses that the bully will have the right to earn forgiveness for their actions.

For resolution of a bullying issue:

- The bully/bullies will acknowledge that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- The bully/bullies will apologise to their target(s)
- The bully/bullies will receive a consequence in line with the Behaviour Policy
- Staff will continue to monitor the situation
- The bully/bullies will receive help to change behaviour, including the use of Individual Behaviour Plan(s) if necessary

3.8 Data collection

To monitor the impact of the policy, data will be collected from pupils and parents annually in November during anti-bullying week. This data will be reported to governors and staff.

This anti-bullying policy is reviewed annually by governors and staff. This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy, the Inclusion Policy and the Single Equality Scheme.

3.9 Bullying Incident Records

Bullying Incident Records will include details of:

- Nature of incident (s) – outline of what happened, where, when, type
- Names of those involved – those bullying, those being bullied and bystanders
- Analysis of seriousness – severity of impact, frequency, duration, intent, imbalance of power, empathy (remorse)
- Action (s) taken
- Monitoring - feedback from those involved including parents

4.0 Appendices

4.1 Recognising bullying

Early recognition is the key to successfully preventing and dealing with a bullying situation. A child may not feel able to report bullying as bullies intimidate their targets into staying silent. However, a child may indicate by signs or changes in behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

- cries themselves to sleep at night or has 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 dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- 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
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

4.2 Impact of Bullying

Persistent bullying can result in:

- depression
- low self-esteem
- shyness
- poor academic achievement
- isolation
- threatened or attempted suicide
- Unchecked bullying also damages the bully, who learns that he or she can get away with violence, aggression and threats.