

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed November 2020

Next Review Autumn 2021



This document needs to be read in conjunction with the Whole School Child Protection Policy and Peer on Peer Abuse Policy.

Introduction

At Gotham Primary School, we aim to produce an inclusive environment for all pupils which openly discusses differences between people and celebrates diversity.

As a consequence, we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for learning for all our pupils to allow them to improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We expect pupils to act safely and feel safe in school, including that they understand the issues relating to all forms of bullying and that they feel confident to seek support from school should they feel they or others are unsafe.

We would also want parents/carers to feel confident that their children are safe and cared for in school and that incidents, if they do arise, are dealt with promptly and well.

The school is aware of its legal obligations including the Equalities Act 2010. We are aware of our role within the local community supporting parents/carers and working with other agencies outside the school where appropriate.

Policy Development

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community with input from staff and parents

- Members of staff- working with Lorna Naylor – NCC Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Coordinator at Staff Meeting (28.02.18) Staff Briefing (08.03.18)
- Governors – discussion at SDP 28.03.18
- Parents/carers – (written consultations, parent focus groups producing a shorter parent's guide)
- Children – through the school council, circle time discussions in class.

This policy is available

- Online at www.gothamprimary.co.uk
- From the school office

Roles and responsibilities

The Head teacher – Has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies and appointing an Anti-bullying coordinator who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

The Anti – Bullying Coordinator in our school is: Janette Allen HT

The responsibilities are:-

- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing bullying incidents
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

The nominated Governors with the responsibility for Pupil welfare (which includes Behaviour and Anti-bullying) are: Linda Dale and Andrew Howard

Definition of Bullying

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/what-bullying/aba-definition-bullying

Behaviour often associated with bullying

Baiting

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonize those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretly to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get in to trouble.

Banter

The dictionary describes banter as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'.

Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.

Types of Banter

- Friendly Banter- there's no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits
- Ignorant Banter- crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry
- Malicious Banter- done to humiliate a person - often in public

Occasionally, an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent e.g. if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **Physical** – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- **Verbal** - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- **Emotional** – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- **Online /cyber** – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- **Indirect** - can include the exploitation of individuals.

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

Why are children and young people bullied?

Specific types of bullying include:

Prejudice Related Bullying

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child

- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy ,Roma, Travellers
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex /gender
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and ensure that patterns do not develop through monitoring.

Other vulnerable groups include

- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Prejudice Related Language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transsexual, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Where does bullying take place?

Bullying is not confined to the school premises. It also persists outside school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community and may continue into Further Education.

The school acknowledges its responsibilities to support families if bullying occurs off the premises.

Cyberbullying

The increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims.

Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school.

Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school, we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other forms of bullying.

Cyberbullying can include:-

- hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice/hate messages
- Impersonating someone on line
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our online safety policy and progression) and encourage good online behaviour.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people
- young people and staff
- between staff
- individuals or groups

Reporting and Responding to Bullying

Our school has clear and well publicised systems to report bullying for the whole school community (including staff, parents/carers, children and young people) this includes those who are the victims of bullying or have witnessed bullying behaviour (bystanders).

Systems for reporting

Children discuss different kinds of bullying and the role and responsibility of the bystander and are encouraged to report incidents. This takes place in assembly, in class circle time and school council time. Parents/carers are welcome to discuss concerns with staff.

- Issues should be reported to the class teacher who will record the incident on SIMs
- TAs and Middays will report to the class teacher. The incident will then be entered on SIMS.
- Children are encouraged to report incidents. They can talk to any adult – or ask a friend to report on their behalf or they can write it down.
- It is a requirement of staff to log behaviour/bullying incidents on SIMs. We have discussed which kinds of incidents are to be recorded at Staff Meeting and at Staff Briefing. The office staff and the middays have been briefed by the HT.

Procedures

All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated involving all parties. The staff are aware of and follows the same procedures.

- We use restorative practice when dealing with behaviour incidents, which allows the victim of any kind of harm to give voice to their feelings and share the resolution to the problem. This includes interviewing all parties including target, bully and all others involved.
- Appropriate disciplinary sanctions are imposed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. These are graded according to the seriousness of the incident but send out a message that bullying is unacceptable
- Our responses may vary according to the type of bullying and may involve other agencies where appropriate.
- Following up, in particular keeping in touch with the person who reported the situation, parents/carers.
- We have a clear complaints' procedure for parents/carers who are not satisfied with the school's actions. Having a range of follow-up responses and support appropriate to the situation for all involved such as - solution focused, restorative approach, circle of friends, individual work with victim, perpetrator, bystanders and others affected by the bullying, referral to outside agencies if appropriate
- Liaising with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises i.e. in the case of cyberbullying or hate crime.

Recording bullying and evaluating the policy

Bullying incidents will be recorded by a member of staff who deals with the incident and put onto SIMS.

Where bullying is suspected or proven, a letter will be sent to the parents of all children involved. Copies of paperwork relating to incidents of bullying will be stored centrally so as to monitor them. Parents will be kept fully informed of the process of supporting the victim of bullying as well as supporting the perpetrator. The perpetrator may themselves be a victim, principles of contextual safeguarding need to be applied here (see the School Child Protection Policy)

Prejudice related bullying/incidents are monitored within school.

Information stored in school will be used to ensure individuals incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy. This information will be discussed by staff in regular staff briefings each half term. This information will be presented to the governors as part of the termly Head Teacher's report. The policy will be reviewed and updated every two years.

Strategies for preventing bullying

As part of our ongoing commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils, we at Gotham Primary school have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour.

- Ensuring that the school actively promotes the celebration of difference and diversity as part of their core values, underpinned by our code of conduct 'Respect'.
- Anti-Bullying week annually in November and Safer Internet Day in February
- PSHE lessons, and circle times to address live issues.
- Golden Book which recognises and celebrates individual worth.
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as cyber bullying and internet safety
- Student voice in class and through school council

Reactive programmes for vulnerable groups or groups involved in bullying.

- Restorative Justice
 - Counselling and/or Mediation schemes
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- Specific initiatives for identified groups such as young people whose first language is not English, SEND/disabled students, children who have been bullied or are displaying bullying behaviour
 - Support for parents/carers
 - Support for all school staff
 - Staff training and development for all staff including those involved in lunchtime and before and after school activities
 - Encouraging all staff to model expected behaviour