



Lowther Primary School - Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy was adopted formally by the Governors in March 2012

The next review of this policy is due in July 2025

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy, the Behaviour Policy and the Online Safety Policy.

INTRODUCTION

We know that pupils learn best in a safe and calm environment free from disruption, and in which education is the primary focus.

Employer's duties

- Employers are responsible under the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 for the health and safety of non-employees, such as pupils, who are at the workplace. They are required to do all that is reasonably practicable to protect their health and safety.
- Employers also have a common law duty of care to pupils in school. They are required to take reasonable care.
- The statutory and common law duties are discharged if reasonable precautions are taken to prevent bullying in schools and there are procedures in place to record any incidents that do take place, and procedures to take appropriate action to stop further incidents.
- Employers should give employees who are responsible for implementing a school's anti-bullying procedures whatever information and training is necessary.

Employee's duties

- Employees must take reasonable care for the health and safety of others at work.
- Employees must co-operate with the employer in health and safety matters.

What is bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying, but it is usually defined as behaviour that is intended to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else, physically or emotionally, repeated over a period of time. It is often aimed at certain groups, for example because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It can be difficult for victims to defend themselves against it.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the victim and the bullies. It damages the atmosphere of the school. Pupils may be drawn into the taunting and tormenting of a victim by group pressure.

Bullying can take many forms:

Physical – pinching, hitting, jostling, kicking, 'play-fighting' (which may not be perceived as 'play' for one of those involved); and hiding, taking or damaging belongings

Verbal – name calling, teasing, mockery, insults. It is important to consider the effect that the name calling has on the victim, rather than the words used, which may seem to others to be harmless

Emotional – being deliberately unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours, inciting others to do the same

Racist – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity

Religious/cultural – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of religious belief or other cultural issue

Sexual or sexist – making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness, uninvited propositions, uninvited touching and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery

Homophobic – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of actual or perceived sexual orientation

For reasons related to special educational needs or disability – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of learning difficulties or other disability

Cyber bullying – the use of information and communications technology (mobile phone, email, social websites, text messages, cameras and the internet, 'sexting'), deliberately to upset someone else. Cyber bullying can take place at any time and anywhere. It can have a profound effect on a child as the technology allows information (or misinformation) to be distributed widely, instantly and directly to the child's home or mobile device. The victim can feel that there is nowhere to escape from the bullying

Symptoms of bullying

Signs that a child is being bullied could be:

- The child becoming withdrawn
- A deterioration in the child's work
- Erratic attendance or spurious illness
- Persistently arriving late at school
- General unhappiness or anxiety
- The child wanting to remain with adults
- Sudden outbursts not in keeping with the child's normal behaviour
- Physical symptoms, including headaches, stomach aches, fainting, fits, vomiting or hyperventilation
- Depression, which can continue into adult life, and sometimes feeling that life is not worth living

PROCEDURE

In dealing with bullying we aim to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and the school's anti-bullying policy
- Model an ethos of mutual respect, because this is the right way to behave
- Develop a clear understanding of how our actions affect others
- Increase understanding for victims
- Teach pupils about their relationships with others through the curriculum
- Develop an atmosphere of trust, in which there is always a listening and supportive adult

The School raises the awareness of staff to the issues described in this policy through training and discussion, and action is taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur. We work with outside

agencies including the NSPCC to offer support and information to staff, children and families.

The following are amongst strategies we may use to support pupils:

Befriending - Befriending involves assigning selected pupil volunteers to be with and befriend pupils who are being bullied or having difficulties because they are new to the school or upset by an event outside school, e.g. a family bereavement.

The objective is to give the befriended pupil someone to talk to, and to help them to feel more positive about themselves.

Circle of Friends - A small number of pupils volunteer to form a circle of friends for a vulnerable pupil to help improve the pupil's level of inclusion and acceptance and to increase insight into his or her feelings and behaviour.

Support Groups - The support group for a bullied pupil includes those involved in the bullying. The aim is to get the bully to identify with the victim and then to help to resolve the problem.

Mediation by adults - Members of staff can help establish ground rules between pupils who are being bullied and the pupils who are doing the bullying to help them co-exist in school.

Assertiveness training groups - From time to time we will involve the behaviour support team with assertiveness training for groups. This can cover:

- Making assertive statements
- Resisting manipulation and threats
- Dealing with name calling
- Staying calm in difficult situations
- Escaping safely from physical restraint
- Getting help from onlookers
- Boosting self esteem

Formal Action

If pupils do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, we will take formal action to stop bullying behaviour. Sanctions are in line with the school's behaviour policy.

In dealing with bullying incidents, we will observe six key points:

- We will not ignore bullying
- Staff should not make premature assumptions
- All accounts of the incidents should be listened to fairly
- We will make every effort to adopt a problem-solving approach which encourages pupils to find solutions
- We will follow up to check bullying has not resumed
- Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on

Records

The school will keep records of all incidents and the school's response.

Advice to bullied pupils

We will tell our children not to suffer in silence. This will be reinforced through general teaching, through PSHE, and through the safe use of the internet and digital technology.

During a bullying incident, pupils will be advised to:

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as they can
- Be firm and clear and look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as they can
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away

After they have been bullied, pupils should:

- Tell a teacher or other adult at school
- Tell their family
- Take a friend with them if they are scared to tell an adult by themselves
- Not blame themselves for what has happened

When they talk to an adult about the bullying, pupils should be clear about:

- What has happened to them
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Where it happened
- Who saw what happened
- What they have done about it already

The role of parents

Bullying is everyone's problem. All staff, pupils and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it, and to make the school a happier place for everyone.

When, after discussion, we confirm a child has been bullying we will contact the parents to discuss the issues.

We will ask parents to:

- Talk to the child and explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy
- Show the child how to join in with others without bullying
- Make an appointment to see the child's teacher as soon as possible, and explain the problem and discuss how the school and the parents together can stop the bullying
- Talk to the child regularly about how things are going at school
- Give the child lots of praise and encouragement when they are being kind and considerate to others

From this sanctions and outline plans will be agreed. We will follow up the bullying child's behaviour, and further bullying may result in exclusion.

We ask parents to contact the school if they suspect their child is being bullied.

Parents of a bullied child should:

- Talk to the child calmly, and reassure the child that telling them about it was the right thing to do
- Make a note of what the child says
- Explain that the child should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff straight away
- Make an appointment to see the child's teacher as soon as possible

POLICY REVIEW

Monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact

This policy will be monitored by the governing board and reviewed every two years, or earlier in the light of any changed circumstances, either in our school or in the local area. The policy will always take due note of guidance provided by the DfE and the local authority.