

# FIRTHMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Anti-Bullying Policy

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## Introduction

In Firthmoor Primary School we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that we will respond to known incidents of bullying.

Bullying will not be tolerated and is unacceptable in any form. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or in the local community.

The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

## Aims

- All governors, teaching, non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should understand what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at school
- For everyone to feel safe while at school and to deal effectively with bullying
- To support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to
- To help and support bullies to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and to understand how their actions affect others and why it needs to change

The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our school is a safe place for children and adults to be.

In order to achieve our aims, we will ensure:

- All pupils, staff and parents understand the anti-bullying policy
- There are procedures within school for reporting bullying
- That all staff have the necessary skills and confidence to deal with incidents of bullying effectively and promptly and effectively report, record and monitor if necessary
- That no child or young person's educational opportunities and achievement is disadvantaged due to the experience of bullying
- That there is effective communication with parents and the school on the subject of bullying

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. In other words, bullying is considered to be 'unacceptable behaviour which occurs **'Several Times, On Purpose'**. We teach the children **STOP** to help them remember the definition of bullying and how to respond – **'Start Telling Other People'**.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying can take place between:

- children

- child / adult
- adults
- individuals or groups
- face to face or indirectly using a range of cyber bullying methods

It can happen in isolation or quite often in the presence of others and can take place anywhere such as, in the classroom, playground, school journeys, toilets, off site visits, between families within the local community and through the internet or mobile devices.

Bullying can be:

Verbal	name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments and teasing
Physical	kicking, hitting, punching, pushing, pinching or any use of violence
Emotional	producing offensive graffiti, excluding people from groups, being unfriendly, spreading hurtful and untrue rumours, being forced to do things against own will and taking belongings or money, threatening gestures
Online bullying	Misuse of all areas of the internet, such as email, chat / blog sites, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat etc. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities, iPads, games consoles etc.
Racial	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobic	focusing on the issue of sexuality

### Perpetrators and Victims

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another. This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual,
- The strength of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach this in the same way as any other category of Child Protection; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter.

Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable pupils; those coming from troubled families, or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a tendency to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.

### Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

### **Possible Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

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
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school anxious)
- 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 make less effort with school work than previously
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has items or money continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (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 and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lacks eye contact
- becomes short tempered
- changes in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### **Cyber Bullying**

Access to the internet and mobile technology can lead to cyber bullying both within and outside school. Cyber-bullying can happen anytime of the day and with a potentially bigger audience as people can send / forward on content quickly. Cyber bullying which occurs outside school can have a significant impact in school. The Education Act 2011 gives teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Whilst bullying itself is not a criminal offence, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a

threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender. In the most serious cases of cyber bullying, advice may be sought from the police.

### **Child on child abuse**

#### **Allegations of abuse made against other children**

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways, such as sexting, bullying (including cyberbullying), exclusion, gender based violence and assault. This could, for example, include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. It is clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. All victims of child on child abuse or bullying are supported and staff are required to follow the reporting procedures within the school’s safeguarding policy.

### **Bullying Outside School Premises**

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises “to such an extent as is reasonable”. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring on the journey to and from school or off the school premises, such as on public transport, outside the local shops.

### **Outcomes**

Firthmoor Primary has set procedures to follow in implementing sanctions where a bullying incident has occurred. These sanctions are applied in appropriate proportion to the event. In the event of all other avenues being exhausted, or in particularly serious cases this may lead to suspension.

- All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.
- Parents of the children involved may also be questioned about the incident or their general concerns.
- The child displaying unacceptable behaviour may be asked to genuinely apologise (as appropriate to the child’s age and level of understanding).
- Other consequences may take place, e.g. a parent being informed about their child’s behaviour and a request that the parent/carer supports the school with any sanctions that it takes. Wherever possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with a child continually demonstrating unacceptable behaviour towards others. eg police, counsellor etc
- In serious cases, suspension will be considered

During and after the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded in CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System). The incident will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place. The Chair of Governors/Safeguarding Governor may be informed of any incidents recorded along with incidents, sanctions and reconciliation.

### **Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Bullying**

At Firthmoor Primary we use a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour including:

- Co-operative group work
- Circle Time
- PSHE Lessons

- Friendship Bench
- Online Safety Training (E-Safety)
- Pastoral Care
- Counselling and Children's Wellbeing Practitioner
- Promote positive use of social media
- Buddy systems
- Assemblies
- Anti-bullying Week
- Training for all members of staff on anti-bullying policy and strategy
- Promotion of policies such as; Behaviour Policy, PSHE Policy, Online Safety and ICT Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies

The ethos and working philosophy of Firthmoor Primary means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded.

Staff will regularly discuss bullying. This will inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and often leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying and report any incidents. Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular theme in line with our code of conduct and expectations.

Friendship groups may bring about the imbalance of power and must be led towards welcoming others to join them and not excluding others from their group. Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

Children are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school or class rules
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- writing stories or drawing pictures about bullying
- signing an acceptable use policy and home school agreement
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that children who use unacceptable behaviour towards others are dealt with quickly

If a child feels that they are being bullied then there are several procedures that they are encouraged to follow: (not hierarchical)

- STOP – Start Telling Other People
- tell a friend
- tell your class School Councillor
- tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust
- tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust
- discuss it as part of your Circle / PSHE time
- ring Childline and follow the advice given

## Recording of Bullying Incidents

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must be prepared to report each incident on CPOMS and notify the SLT. This would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with children, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying. All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the children involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that further incidents by the same child(ren) may be prevented from happening in the future.

## Confidentiality

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a child for help. Staff must make this clear to children. Unless clearly inappropriate, children will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

Safeguarding procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made. An underlying principle in supporting children in Firthmoor Primary School is that all children are listened to sensitively and objectively and all incidences of bullying will be taken seriously. Although the school cannot guarantee confidentiality children will be informed of national and local help lines, if appropriate, where the child does not wish for further action to be taken by the school.

## Help Organisations

Family Lives / Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222  
<http://www.familylives.org.uk/>

Kidscape 020 7730 3300  
<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

Childline 0800 1111  
<https://www.childline.org.uk>

NSPCC 0808 800 5000  
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

Bullying Online [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

## Advice to Parents

Firthmoor Primary School offers an open-door policy for parents to discuss bullying issues with the senior members of staff and Inclusion Officer. As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied, you should:

1. Report bullying incidents to the class teacher or Inclusion Officer (Miss O'Meara).
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff and the Headteacher notified.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly

6. An attempt will be made to help the child using unacceptable behaviour towards others, to change their behaviour.

We advise parents/carers not to do the following:

- Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child or by speaking to their parents.
- Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary. The school will analyse the school's anti-bullying data, identify trends and evaluate the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies as part of the review process.



## Appendix 1

### **General Procedures and Dealing with Incidents**

#### Reporting and recording a bullying incident involving children

We take the view that everyone has a responsibility to report incidents of bullying or to share their concerns with a member of the school community. At Firthmoor Primary School we follow the school guide to reporting and dealing with bullying incidents.

#### Guidance for children

If you are being bullied:

- Remember it is not your fault
- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and, if possible, tell them to stop and tell them how you feel.

After you have been bullied:

- All bullying is wrong and you do not have to stay silent about it
- Tell an adult or somebody you trust about what has happened straight away. Adults in school have a responsibility to give you help and support around bullying
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- Keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying

When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:

- What has happened to you
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Who saw what was happening
- Where it happened
- What you have done about it already.

If you experience bullying by mobile phone, text messages or e-mail:

- Don't retaliate or reply
- Save the evidence; do not delete anything
- Make sure you tell an adult who you trust
- Contact your service provider or look at their website to see where to report incidents
- Be careful who you give your mobile phone number or e-mail address to
- Make a note of exactly when a bullying / threatening message was sent
- For contacts and details of where to seek help outside school please see the help organisations (page 8).

#### Guidance for parents/carers

If your child has been bullied:

- Calmly talk with your child about his/ her experiences
- Make a note of what your child says including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened

- Reassure your child that he/ she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to an adult in school immediately
- Contact your child's class teacher/ Headteacher / Inclusion Officer to explain the problem

When talking with members of staff about bullying:

- Try to stay calm and bear in mind that the staff member 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 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 and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If your child is displaying bullying behaviour towards others:

- Talk with your child and explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher / Inclusion Officer and explain the problems your child is experiencing as well as discussing how you can work together to stop him/ her bullying others
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at the School
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is co-operative or kind to other people.

If your child is experiencing any form of cyber bullying:

- Ensure your child is careful whom they give their mobile phone number and email address to
- Check exactly when a threatening message was sent and keep evidence of offending e-mails, text messages or online conversations. Do not delete messages
- If the bullying involves a child from the school, contact the headteacher/Inclusion Officer to report this.
- Contact the service provider to report the incidents
- If the cyber bullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, you should consider contacting the police.