



# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

## 1. Requirements

### 1.1 Change Record

Issue	Date	Author	Description
1.0	April 2015	H Mepham	Existing Anti-Bullying Policy
1.1	August 2017	P Atkin	Update in response to pupil survey
2.0	20 September 2017	P Atkin	Ratification by Governors
2.1	16 September 2018	P Atkin	Resubmitted for ratification without change
3.0	19 September 2018	P Atkin	Ratification by Governors
3.1	20 September 2019	P Atkin	Minor update to bring in line with new Positive Behaviour Policy
4.0	25 September 2019	P Atkin	Ratification by Governors
4.1	25 November 2020	P Atkin	Minor updates
5.0	2 December 2020	P Atkin	Ratification by Governors

Note: All issues except those of the form 'X.0' are draft.

### 1.2 Equality Statement

In developing and reviewing this policy we have carefully considered its impact on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

### 1.3 Approval and Review

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on 2 December 2020. It is due for review in the Autumn Term 2021.

## 2. Principles

At Fowlmere Primary School we believe that every child has the right to feel safe in school and enjoy their education without the threat of bullying.

This policy defines six key aims:

- To help individuals celebrate and value their differences and to acknowledge and respect the rights and differences of others.
- To encourage everyone to view themselves as an important part of the school community where their participation is valued and views appreciated.
- To encourage an openness amongst all members of the community about all forms of bullying.
- To help individuals take responsibility for and understand the consequences of their own actions.
- To develop a procedure whereby all incidents of bullying and harassment are dealt with fairly and appropriately.
- To help everyone feel safe and secure in reporting incidents of bullying.

### 3. Definition

Bullying is a persistent, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone. Different types of bullying have three things in common:

- they involve **deliberately hurtful** behaviour;
- they are **repeated** over time;
- they involve an **unfair balance of power** which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying 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.

### 4. Preventing Bullying

Our approach to behaviour is outlined in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy and this document suggests a range of strategies for promoting good behaviour throughout our school community.

In addition, specific action is taken by the school to prevent bullying through:

- maintaining the ethos outlined in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy;
- raising awareness of the issues of bullying with staff (at staff meetings and on training days), pupils (through the curriculum and school assemblies) and parents (via the school newsletter, parents meetings and at new intake meetings) at regular opportunities;
- the involvement of other agencies, eg community police;
- the taught curriculum;
- encouraging the wearing of school uniform;
- ensuring that children understand they have a right to be themselves, hold their own beliefs and celebrate their background and culture;
- agreeing class and school rules with pupils regularly, and maintaining high expectations of the relationships between pupils;
- teaching specifically about personal safety and anti-bullying;
- teaching specifically about e-safety and dealing with cyber bullying.
- annual participation in the national Anti-Bullying Week

### 5. Who is involved?

#### 5.1 The Perpetrator

The person who bullies is someone who attempts to exercise power over someone else. Any child can use bullying behaviours intentionally or otherwise: stereotyping people who bully can be misleading and lead to bullying behaviour being missed by staff because the perpetrator is not seen as the "right type" to bully.

It should be recognised that people who bully have real difficulties of their own and we have a responsibility to support and educate them. In many cases, people who bully have themselves been

the victims of bullying, or at least suffer from low self-esteem – in these cases bullying helps them to feel “better” than other children.

## **5.2 The Victim**

The victim is the target of the bullying behaviours. Anyone can be a victim. However, children at particular risk include those who:

- are new to the class or school
- are different in appearance, speech or background from other pupils
- suffer from low self-esteem or are timid, nervous or anxious
- are ‘show-offs’ or loud-mouthed
- demonstrate ‘entertaining’ reactions when bullied eg tantrums, loss of control
- have special needs - children whose needs arise from obvious physical factors are rarely bullied. However, those whose needs are intellectual only are at much greater risk

*Action Against Bullying, SCRE, 1992*

This is not an exhaustive list and indeed, the victims of bullying may not fit these specific criteria.

Experiences in schools teaches us that the following groups are particularly at risk:

- pupils with mild to moderate special educational needs, eg those who may be perceived to be “slow” or “hold-up” lessons for the more able; or make unusual suggestions or wildly incorrect answers
- more able or gifted & talented pupils, eg those who can be perceived to “dominate” lessons, or answer ahead of everyone else; be the teachers “go-to” respondent or just simply be “right” all the time
- pupils from families of different cultures, eg those who may have different priorities or interests; or who may struggle with language and therefore make unusual or inappropriate responses
- pupils with specific or unusual interests, or those who do not follow the interests of the majority – such as football;
- pupils with poor social skills, eg those who struggle to connect with others and as such become isolated; or who may be genuinely “hard-work” to be around
- pupils who are “out-of-the-loop”; eg those without internet access or specific technology, whether for socio-economic or lifestyle reasons, who are easy to exclude
- pupils whose appearance is different, eg those who are tall or overweight; or who choose a particular appearance.

Again, this list is not exhaustive.

## **5.3 Observers or Bystanders**

Those who witness bullying without taking any helpful action. Bystanders are not “passive”: they actively contribute to the problem as they are condoning, if not encouraging, bullying. We have a responsibility to support all pupils to not become bystanders to bullying.

## **5.4 Other Pupils**

Even children who are not directly involved with bullying may also be affected, as dealing with incidents often consumes a great deal of their learning time and can adversely affect the atmosphere in the class.

## 6. Identifying Bullying

Pupils, staff and parents should be clear about what is meant by the term bullying. (Strategies for this are identified in Section 4 above). It cannot be assumed that everyone has a shared understanding. For example, many people who bully claim that they are not, in fact, bullying – ‘*I was just playing*’ or ‘*I was only joking*’ are regular excuses. As such, the Headteacher is responsible for judging if bullying is taking place after consultation with involved parties.

All pupils must recognise that bullying is unacceptable. Children and parents are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying. Dealing with bullying matters outside of school, between families alone, should be discouraged by all staff and governors.

Reinforcement of the unacceptable nature of bullying should be a recurring part of every child’s school experience.

It is important that all school staff look out for signs of bullying and that they react decisively in every case referring to Section 7 below.

Bullying is rarely a straightforward matter and often includes a number of complex social interactions. Staff should err on the side of caution and the anti-bullying procedure should be followed in all the following cases:

- where the behaviour clearly meets the three criteria set out in the definition (Section 2) staff should follow the procedure from Stage 2 (Section 7.2)
- where bullying behaviour is suspected, either by staff or a parent, but not proven, staff should follow the procedure from Stage 1 (Section 7.1)
- where a victim *feels* as if they are being bullied, for example: there is a persistent issue, but not necessarily a single perpetrator; or the perpetrator’s persistent behaviour is not deliberate but has the same effect as if it were (in the first instance staff should follow the Stage 1 procedures: Section 7.1)
- where there is a reciprocal pattern of bullying behaviour

A single, isolated incident should be dealt with using the Positive Behaviour Policy, but staff should be aware of the cumulative effect of individual incidents and be sensitive to the victim’s feelings and perceptions. Records are an important tool in judging the cumulative impact of repeated incidents.

Parents too should be aware of signs of bullying and encourage openness. Very often, children may not wish to tell anyone that they are being bullied. In some cases it is because they may feel ashamed or even guilty. In others they fear further bullying may take place as a result. It may also be that they feel it is a waste of time if previous problems have been ignored. Although children should be encouraged to be open about bullying, not all will, so it is important to be aware of signs that a child may be the victim of bullying.

Children who are being bullied may:

- be frightened of walking to and from school;
- be unwilling to go to school;
- begin to do poorly in their school work;
- have their possessions go missing;
- become withdrawn, anxious and/or prone to tears;
- begin to display bullying behaviours towards other children or siblings;
- become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- demonstrate changes in behaviour;
- be frightened to say what is wrong;
- give improbable excuses for the above actions;

although each of these actions may equally be caused by other factors.

Where bullying involves children with Special Educational Needs, staff should take care to fully explain the situation and take appropriate steps to support them within the 'Circle of Friends' framework. When dealing with incidents involving children with Special Educational Needs, staff should be aware that their actions may be a direct result of the difficulties experienced by these individuals.

- In some cases children with Special Educational Needs are more sensitive to criticism and may have difficulty successfully interacting with other children on the playground. For example, when involved in a game and something goes wrong, children with Special Educational Needs may find disagreements particularly difficult to understand and cope with and may interpret this as bullying. Intervention at Stage 1 should be used to support the child in question.
- Some children with Special Educational Needs find moderating their voices and use of language difficult, or may be overly physical, which may be interpreted as bullying by others. Monitoring at Stage 1 can help to identify a pattern of behaviour and support all pupils to manage situations better.

In both cases staff should take the individual child's needs and difficulties into consideration and deal with the situation appropriately.

## 7. Our Approach to Bullying

The following plan outlines the steps to be taken when bullying is reported or suspected.

1. Staff should treat **all** disclosures of bullying seriously and take time to listen to the complaint and reassure the victim.
2. All reported and suspected bullying should be passed to the **class teacher** as soon as possible, irrespective of how trivial it may seem. It is the class teacher's responsibility to coordinate the approach to the specific bullying issue.
3. As soon as is reasonable practicable, preferably the same day, the class teacher should talk with the victim to establish the pattern of behaviour leading to the bullying.
4. The Headteacher should be informed and the situation recorded by the class teacher within *Bromcom*. A decision will be taken as to whether to act at Stage 1 or Stage 2, or whether the Positive Behaviour Policy is appropriate instead.
5. The class teacher meets with the relevant parents to discuss the plans in place and the necessary support from home.

In many cases, there will be linked behaviour outside of school, for example, at after-school club, sports clubs, using mobiles or the internet, or simply on the Butts. This should always be taken into account when investigating bullying and victims and perpetrators should always know that the school is aware of these incidences. **Parents must be informed** so that they can take appropriate action and close liaison with other organisations, eg after-school club, is essential. Staff should closely monitor the impact of events outside of school on the relationships within school.

### 7.1 Stage 1

In most cases, Stage 1 will be the most appropriate course of action. Stage 1 is appropriate when:

- bullying is suspected but the pattern of behaviour is unclear
- there are complex interactions, eg a number of children are involved or there are counter allegations
- a victim *feels* bullied but there is no evidence

Stage 1 should not be used where:

- bullying behaviour is clear and needs immediate remedial action

At Stage 1 the Class Teacher should:

1. **Support the victim**, eg through a “Circle of Friends” approach (Appendix 1) or organising supportive friends, offering inside space or additional contact with a named adult.
2. **Initiate monitoring** using a sheet from Appendix 2. These can be given to the individual, a group or the whole class as necessary.
3. **Meet with the alleged perpetrator** to explain the allegations and what needs to happen to make improvements. Listen to their explanation, but remain aware of and challenge common excuses. **Focus on the impact on the victim.**
4. **Meet with the perpetrator’s parents** to explain the issue and the school’s expectations.
5. **Meet with the victim’s parents** to explain the school’s actions and arrange a follow-up meeting in a week’s time to discuss progress.
6. **Spend some time observing** the interactions of the groups.
7. **Inform staff** of the issue through the pupil briefing.
8. **Ensure that monitoring is completed** and reviewed regularly.

Each week, in discussion with the Headteacher, decide on the next steps:

- The issue is solved and monitoring can stop; or,
- Monitoring needs to continue for a further week; or,
- The situation needs escalating to Stage 2.

The class teacher should meet the victim’s parent’s regularly to inform them of progress. This can be reduced as the issue resolves.

Class teachers may want to use SEAL or PSHCE materials to support the class in a more general way at this time.

## 7.2 Stage 2

At Stage 2 the presence of bullying is clear and decisive action needs to be taken.

1. The Headteacher meets, separately, the victim and the perpetrator and decides on a course of action.
2. The unacceptable behaviour is made clear to the perpetrator and the school’s expectations are reinforced
3. The following could be considered:
  - a meeting between the victim and the perpetrator, with the Headteacher (only if the victim agrees)
  - the use of protective consequences for the perpetrator in order to protect the victim
  - an “on-report” system for the perpetrator
  - access to external services for either the victim or the perpetrator through the Early Help Assessment process
4. The Headteacher meets the perpetrators parents to plan for improvements to behaviour
5. The Headteacher meets the victim’s parents to explain the school’s actions. A follow-up meeting is arranged.
6. The Class Teacher initiates monitoring as at Stage 1 to keep track of improvements. “Circle of Friends” could be used (Appendix 1)

Immediate improvements should be expected. The school retains the right to use exclusion should a perpetrator, given appropriate support, be unable to modify their behaviour to such an extent as to keep the victim safe. Exclusion is the Headteacher’s decision alone and will be taken on consideration of all the circumstances.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **8.1 All staff**

All staff, including supply teachers, PPA teachers, classroom support staff, midday and playground supervisors, are responsible for:

- always listening to anyone who feels that they are a victim of bullying;
- informing the class teacher of reported or suspected incidents of bullying;
- ensuring pupils understand that they will be listened to and that action will be taken, especially since bullying will not, in normal circumstances, be dealt with in a 'public' forum;

### **8.2 Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for supporting staff in dealing with all incidences of bullying or suspected bullying, making decisions on the course of action in complex cases and following up issues at Stage 2. They are also responsible for ensuring that an accurate record of the incidents of bullying that have taken place is maintained.

Periodically the headteacher will initiate surveys of pupil safety.

### **8.3 Class Teacher**

The victim's class teacher is responsible for:

- following up the issue using the approach outlined in Section 7;
- making a record of the issue and informing the headteacher as soon as possible;
- seeking advice from other staff who may know the pupils involved well;
- informing parents of the action the school is taking after an issue has been reported in line with Section 7.
- listening to concerns expressed by parents, children and other members of staff.

### **8.4 Midday and Playground supervisors**

Midday and playground supervisors, including teachers and teaching assistants on duty, are responsible for:

- being vigilant on the playground or in the dining hall for suspected incidents of bullying;
- ensuring that areas of the playground or Butts do not become unsupervised, through careful placement of adults on the playground or Butts.

### **8.5 Pupils**

Pupils are responsible for:

- telling a member of staff if someone they know is being hurt or bullied;
- telling someone if they are themselves being hurt or bullied.

Older pupils are able to support others in their play by training as playleaders.

### **8.6 Parents**

Parents are responsible for:

- informing the class teacher of any concerns or worries about their child with respect to bullying;
- supporting the school's approach to resolution, as either the parent of a victim or a person who has been bullying;



- attending meetings with the class teacher or Headteacher designed to resolve the issue.
- monitoring sensitively the progress and reporting back to the class teacher any further or continuing concerns.

### **8.7 Governors**

Governors are responsible for ensuring that any issues brought to their attention either formally or informally are passed to the school as quickly as possible for resolution.

It is possible that Governors may be asked to investigate any long-term grievance or concern for a family who feel that a bullying issue has not been resolved by the staff in the school. This action should be taken after the family have followed the school's complaints procedure, which is outlined on the school website. Governors will respond to complaints as appropriate within the time constraints outlined in the school's complaints procedure.

## **9. Monitoring**

The headteacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and making recommendations for its review.

## **Appendix 1 – “Circle of Friends” Approach**

The “Circle of Friends” is only one approach following an allegation of bullying. It may, or may not, be an appropriate approach depending on the circumstances. Further guidance is available on the Anti-Bullying Alliance website.

### **Step 1: Meet with the victim**

When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened she starts by talking to the victim about his feelings. She does not question him about the incidents but she does need to know who was involved.

### **Step 2: Convene a meeting with the people involved**

The teacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystander or colluders and even friends of the victim who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. A group of six to eight young people works well.

### **Step 3: Explain the problem**

She tells them about the way the victim is feeling and might use a poem, piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise his distress. At no time does she discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

### **Step 4: Share responsibility**

The teacher does not attribute blame but states that she knows that the group are responsible and can do something about it.

### **Step 5: Ask the group for their ideas**

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The teacher gives some positive responses but she does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

### **Step 6: Leave it up to them**

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. She arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

### **Step 7: Meet them again**

About a week later the teacher discusses with each student, including the victim, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the young people involved in the process.

## **Appendix 2 – Monitoring Logs**

The following pages include logs sheets for the use of pupils. They are merely a guide and can be adapted for specific needs as required.

# Anti-Bullying Logging Sheet



Name

Week Beginning

	Playtime		Lunchtime	
	Score	Comments	Score	Comments
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				

