

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

1.1 Sitwell Junior School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

1.2 Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Sitwell Junior School. If bullying does occur, incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Definition

2.1 Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time, which intentionally hurts or harms.

2.2 Those who bully aim to hurt by means of force, intimidation or ridicule in order to control others or perhaps to inspire a reaction which escalates the situation. Verbal bullying includes teasing or name calling and saying racist or sexist things. Verbal, social or psychological bullying includes threatening or making people do things they don't want to, taking or damaging someone's things, playing unkind practical jokes, making someone feel uncomfortable or scared, ignoring or deliberately leaving someone out of things and saying or writing nasty things about someone. Cyber bullying includes sending nasty text and email messages.

This is not an exhaustive list and if a pupil feels they are being bullied, it should be taken seriously.

How Bullying is conducted

3.1 Bullying can be a one-off or sustained – damaging either way. It can be painfully obvious, but it can also be surreptitious and subtle. It can also be one pupil against another or involve several pupils.

Indicators that a Pupil may be being bullied

4.1 We recognise that many young people may be frightened or reluctant to inform an adult if they are being bullied.

4.2 The pupil may:

- Be frightened of walking to or from school.
- Be unwilling to go to school.
- Begin to perform poorly at school.

- Become withdrawn or tearful.
- Have books, clothing or possessions which are damaged or go missing.
- Become distressed / stop eating.
- Cry easily / have nightmares.
- Become disruptive or aggressive towards adults or other young people at home or school.
- Begin stealing (to pay the bully).

4.3 If a staff member notices a persistent deterioration in a young person's behaviour or mood they should discuss this with the pupil's Class Teacher, the Head Teacher or Learning Mentors and/or have a word with the pupil in private asking whether anything is troubling them and whether they are experiencing bullying.

4.4 Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns about a pupil's well-being with their Class Teacher as soon as possible.

Aims of our Anti-Bullying Strategy

5.1 At Sitwell Junior School we endeavour:

- To ensure all staff, the Governing body, pupils and parents have an understanding of bullying and its consequences; and the knowledge that it is not acceptable at Sitwell Junior School.
- To create an atmosphere of trust between staff and pupils where pupils feel they are listened to and are willing to tell an adult if they are being bullied.
- To ensure that there are clear procedures and systems for reporting and recording bullying, which are understood and followed by all staff.
- To closely monitor pupils who have reported bullying. To ensure pupils and staff learn to keep themselves and others safe.
- To teach pupils to respect the differences between groups of people within the school community.
- To offer support and education to those pupils who are both the victims and perpetrators of bullying, providing them with a range of strategies which they can use if they are at risk of bullying others or are being bullied themselves.
- To encourage 'bystanders' to bullying incidents (adults and children) both to intervene when appropriate to stop the incident and to report it to the pupil's Class Teacher/appropriate staff member so that action can be taken.
- To support and train all staff members in identifying bullying incidents and in dealing with them confidently and effectively.

Combatting Bullying

6.1 Sitwell Junior School is aware that bullying must be tackled on two levels, by focusing on preventative work, but also by responding appropriately when incidents do occur.

6.2 We shall be using the following strategies to ensure that we have a clear, consistent and effective approach to bullying:

- Have well understood channels for any child, staff member or parent to report concerns over bullying.
- Adequate supervision of the school site, especially toilets, lunch queues and distant areas, including if appropriate the school gates at the beginning and end of the day.
- Increased supervision levels and, as appropriate, safe areas for pupils who feel threatened at break and lunch times.
- Rewarding non-aggressive behaviour.
- Encouraging co-operative behaviour.
- The use of Pastoral Support for those young people experiencing interpersonal and peer relationship difficulties.
- Close monitoring of young people with Special Educational Needs.
- Sharing proven good practice with colleagues.

7. Education

7.1 Pupils will be given the opportunity to increase their awareness of both the effects and consequences of bullying through some or all of the following:

- Assemblies / School Council / Curriculum Areas.
- PSHCE Sessions / Class Discussions / Group Work Sessions on issues such as friendship, prejudice, assertiveness and coping strategies.
- P4C (Philosophy for Children) Sessions.
- A consistent approach to the promotion and adoption of the Sitwell Seven Values (Respect, Responsibility, Relationships, Resourcefulness, Reflection, Resilience and Risk Taking).
- Anti-Bullying week.
- Firm, fair and appropriate disciplinary procedures.
- Greater interaction between classes/Year Groups.

Dealing with Bullying Incidents/Allegations

8.1 Where a pupil reports / alleges a bullying incident to an adult, or an adult witnesses an incident, the following are agreed procedures:

- Staff will prioritise ensuring the immediate safety of all other pupils, staff and property. In exceptional circumstances where there is a risk of injury to an individual, a member of staff may physically intervene following the school's behaviour policy on Positive Handling.
- Any injured pupil or member of staff will receive appropriate medical attention as soon as is practicable.
- Staff will inform the appropriate staff members (Class teacher, Head Teacher, Learning Mentor) as soon as possible.
- Head Teacher, Class Teacher or Learning Mentor will interview both the target(s) and bullying pupil(s) separately and in private to establish the facts without apportioning blame.
- A decision will be taken regarding whether to contact the parents of both the target(s) and bullying pupil(s). Senior members of staff will inform the victim's parents if there is any injury or the young person is at risk of significant harm.
- Where deemed necessary, incidents will be recorded on the school system
- Appropriate sanctions and support will be discussed and agreed upon. The Learning Mentor will take the targeted pupil's wishes into account when deciding how to deal with the bullying pupil, but incidents will always be dealt with in line with the school behaviour policy. The incident will be recorded onto the school system and relevant members of staff alerted.
- Both the targeted pupil and the bullying pupil will be offered the opportunity to meet and talk about their experiences.
- After initial investigation by relevant staff, if the incident is deemed to be bullying under the definitions above, the pupils will be informed that notes will be taken of the conversation and both will agree at the end that what has been written is a true record. Confidentiality will not be promised.
- The Learning Mentor will listen carefully and objectively to the pupil's account. The pupil(s) will be encouraged to share what they are feeling.
- Staff will ascertain who has been involved, including bystanders.
- Staff may offer coping / preventative strategies/pastoral support if appropriate.

Support, Education and Consequences for the Bullying Pupil(s)

9.1 Research suggests that encouraging the bullying pupil(s) to think about how the target(s) of bullying is feeling raises their awareness of the pain they are causing and can bring about a positive change in their behaviour.

9.2 Pupils are more likely to show empathy if they receive empathy.

- The Learning Mentor will approach the pupils in a non-confrontational manner with the emphasis on problem solving.
- The Learning Mentor will explain that they would like to talk to the pupil(s) concerning unkindness towards (name of target). Staff will ask the pupil(s) if they know how (name of target) is feeling right now.
- The Learning Mentor will explain that they believe the bullying pupils are responsible for those feelings. They will state formally that this behaviour is not acceptable.
- The Learning Mentor will ask for suggestions as to what the pupil(s) can do to help the targeted pupil to feel better and to help solve the problem.
- Staff will let the pupil(s) know that they will be monitoring the situation and what the likely consequence will be if they hear of further bullying behaviour.

9.3 Menu of consequences

- Monitor the bully, give coping strategies to the victim.

Application of school sanctions

- Follow the sanctions outlined in the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Internal exclusion for a day (if premeditated/deliberate).
- Fixed term exclusion if physical violence, cruel, no remorse.

9.4 Suggested Interventions

- Access to a counselling service - either external or school Pastoral Support.
- Arrange for them to have a buddy.
- Raise their self-esteem so that they don't need to bully.

9.5 The Learning Mentor will enquire about any worries/difficulties that may be behind the behaviour and offer appropriate support.

Working with Parents/Carers

10.1 Sitwell Junior School appreciates that there will be occasions when the parents and carers of one or both sets of pupils involved will feel that the school has not sanctioned appropriately. Parents or carers will be given the opportunity to share their concerns and if appropriate, staff will discuss the decisions to impose the particular sanction(s) with them.

10.2 Where a parent/carer is dissatisfied with the School's handling of a situation, then the Head Teacher will seek to resolve the situation informally. In the event of a formal complaint, then the agreed complaints procedure for the school will be invoked.

10.3 Sitwell Junior School actively encourages and welcomes comments, questions and suggestions regarding our anti-bullying policy. Please contact the appropriate Learning Mentor or Head Teacher.