



## Anti-Bullying Policy

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## **Principles and Values**

Everyone at Silsoe Lower School has the right to feel welcome, safe and happy. As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to.

Bullying will not be tolerated. We will seek 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 and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and 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.

We recognise the effects that bullying can have on pupils' feelings of worth and on their school work, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment to ensure that our school is a safe place for children and adults to be; whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

## **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group, usually repeated over time; that intentionally hurts another individual, or group, either physically or emotionally.

At Silsoe Lower School, bullying is considered to be, "unfair, unacceptable behaviour which occurs **'lots of times, on purpose'**."

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time. Bullying can be;

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racist	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobic, Biphobic or Transphobic	because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
Direct or indirect verbal	name-calling, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber bullying	all areas of the Internet such as email and internet chat, Twitter, Facebook misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e., camera and video facilities, iPad, games consoles.

Bullying may be related to:

- race
- gender
- disability
- religion
- culture
- SEND
- appearance or health condition
- home circumstances including Young Carers and poverty
- sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual violence or harassment, homophobia, transphobia

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply 'falling out'.

### **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 of group size involved
- anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.
- perceived authority over another person

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviours and approach this in the same way as any other category of child abuse; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied; because they may be too young or have a level of special educational needs or disability which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

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 propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.

## **Outcomes**

All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher and/or a senior member of staff.

Parents of the perpetrator may be asked to come in to talk about the incident or about any concerns they may be having.

The child displaying the unacceptable behaviour will be asked to discuss the bullying behaviour with the class teacher and/or senior leader to ensure that they understand why and how the behaviour is unacceptable and the impact on the victim. The child displaying the unacceptable behaviour may be asked to genuinely apologise (as appropriate to the child's age and level of understanding). Other consequences may take place, appropriate to the age of child and bullying behaviour.

In serious cases (defined as children displaying an on-going lack of response to sanctions, that is, no change in behaviour of the perpetrator and an unwillingness to alter their behaviour choices), support from behaviour outreach, a reduced timetable or even fixed term or permanent exclusion will be considered.

During and after the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded in detail on CPOMS and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

## **Prevention**

At Silsoe Lower School we use a variety of methods to support children in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying through class worship, PSHE lessons, SMSC curriculum, Anti-bullying week, E-safety lessons, posters around the school as reminders, use of SEAL materials in lessons and activities relating to anti-bullying through Values Based Education, in addition to our whole school Christian ethos being against bullying.

The ethos and working philosophy of Silsoe Lower School 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 through Values Worships and Celebration Assemblies.

Staff will regularly discuss friendship and bullying, this will inform children that we are serious about dealing with all forms of bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying and report any incidents and concerns about other children's behaviour.

Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular theme in line with our school's Christian ethos and Values Based Education. Staff will follow the equality policy; supporting every child in our school. Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of children or an individual child and they must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. 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 groups.

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:

- agreeing and writing a set of class or school rules
- writing a personal pledge or promise against bullying
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying during PSHE lessons or anti-bullying week special activities
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or whole school
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that these incidents are dealt with quickly
- signing the class and whole school anti-bullying charters

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

- tell a friend
- tell your class Student Voice/School Council rep
- tell a teacher, teaching assistant or someone you trust
- tell a Play Leader or Playground Buddy
- tell a parent or adult at home that you trust
- write it down and give it to an adult you trust

### **Recording of Bullying Incidents**

Staff will record and report each incident where bullying has taken place.

In the case of racist bullying, this must be reported to the Head Teacher or Head of Inclusion.

General incidences of bullying will be recorded in detail on CPOMS. This includes incidents where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying and/or where staff have become involved and have spoken with children. Confirmed cases of bullying must be recorded and followed up for a period of time afterwards.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff members 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.

*Work with children who have been bullied could include some or all of the following:*

- they will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and this is not their fault. We will assure them that it was right to report the incident
- we will encourage them to talk about how they feel
- we will try to ascertain the extent of the problem
- we will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved
- we will discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe

- we will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us
- we will affirm that bullying can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does.

*Work with children who have bullied other children will involve some or all of the following:*

- we will listen to their version of events
- we will talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying
- we will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable and that we expect bullying to stop and we will seek a commitment to this end
- we will affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied
- we will adopt a joint problem solving approach (restorative justice) where this is appropriate and ask the pupils involved to help us find solutions to the problem. This will encourage pupils involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others
- we will consider sanctions under our school's behaviour/discipline policy
- we will advise pupils responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure that bullying stops and we will ensure that those involved know that we have done so
- when bullying occurs, we will contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage
- we will keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them
- we will follow up incidents with the victim over the subsequent weeks to check how things are and how they are feeling.

### **Our Responsibilities**

Everyone within school is expected to

- act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another
- adhere to and promote the aims of this policy.

### **Pupils are expected to:**

- report all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents which victims may be afraid to report
- support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school. This includes not being a 'bystander'
- show an understanding of what bullying is and the difference between this and 'falling out' with others.

### **Parents can help by:**

- supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way.
- reminding their child(ren) that they must tell someone should they ever be bullied.

## **Concerns, Complaints and Compliments**

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying – and we would ask that this is brought to the Head Teacher's notice. If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure, a copy of which is available on request.

We would also be pleased to receive compliments – feedback from parents when things have gone well.

## **Evaluating our Policy**

We will evaluate our anti-bullying policy using the following measures:

- the numbers of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period
- pupils' perceptions of bullying in school through structured discussions in class time
- the number of complaints and compliments that we received from parents.

## **Ownership of the Policy**

This policy was drawn up in consultation with staff, parents and pupils.

The policy applies to all staff and to all pupils, whether temporarily or permanently on the school roll.

The Head Teacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy, and in its success.

Governors will ask for regular briefings on bullying within school.

This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour Policy.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Governor will take a special interest in bullying within school.