

Gosforth Park First School

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GP-GB-PO-027 GPFS Anti-Bullying Policy	01	26/10/2018	James Hindess	Document release in QMS format
GP-GB-PO-027 GPFS Anti-Bullying Policy	02	10/01/2020	James Hindess	Added 'Keep a detailed record of what is being reported' to 'Supporting Victims' section

Rationale

Gosforth Park First School is a caring, positive and friendly community, who strive to create a safe environment for all our pupils. We have high standards for our pupils and aim to provide a welcoming and secure atmosphere in which they can achieve their full potential. No child should be made to feel unhappy or unsafe which is why bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. Where bullying does occur, pupils have the right to expect immediate action and for incidents to be dealt with promptly and effectively. This policy aims to outline the key issues related to bullying in school.

In line with the Equality Act 2010 it is essential that our school:

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advances equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

At Gosforth Park First School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils and expect all teaching and non-teaching staff to share this commitment. Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

This policy is closely linked with our *Behaviour Policy*, our *Safeguarding Policy* and our school's *Vision, Aims and Values.*

Objectives

- For governors, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers to have an understanding of what bullying is.
- To assure and reassure pupils and parents that the school takes bullying seriously and that everyone involved will be fully supported when issues arise.
- To be clear that any form of bullying will not be tolerated.

We are determined to promote and develop a school ethos where bullying behaviour is regarded as unacceptable to ensure a safe and secure environment is sustained for all pupils. We aim for all pupils to reach their potential academically, socially and personally through learning and playing in a safe and secure environment.

What is bullying?

At Gosforth Park First School we define bullying as any situation in which a child is verbally or physically threatened and/or hurt by another child or group of children with the intention to cause pain, distress or any type of harm.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racial – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic – as above, because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal – name-calling, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber – all areas of internet, social networking and mobile threats by texts, calls and images.

Vulnerable Groups

We recognise that some groups of pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying than others, including:

- Looked After Children
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Children from ethnic minorities
- Children entitled to Free School Meals
- Children for whom English is an Additional Language
- Children who are perceived to be gay, lesbian or bisexual

Signs and symptoms of bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened/refuses to attend school
- attempts to abscond from school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or secretive
- begins to show poor/slow academic progress
- comes home with clothes torn or property damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or go missing
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry/stops eating
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong

- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- starts stammering
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Response to Bullying

All cases of alleged bullying should be reported to the Headteacher or a senior member of staff.

In any case of alleged bullying, either the Class Teacher, the Headteacher, or a senior member of staff should first establish the facts, and build an accurate picture of events over time, through speaking to the alleged perpetrator(s), victim(s) and adult witnesses, as well as parents and pupil witnesses if necessary and appropriate.

If the allegation of bullying is upheld, the Headteacher or senior leader should seek to use a restorative approach with the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) together. The perpetrator(s) should fully understand the consequences of their actions on the victim(s) and apologise without reservation. Both parties should be clear that a repeat of these behaviours will not be acceptable.

All bullying incidents must be recorded on CPOMs. Parents of both parties should be informed.

If the situation does not improve, the Headteacher (or senior member of staff) should meet with the parent(s) of the perpetrator and agree clear expectations and boundaries which would be shared with the pupils involved. Any further incidents should lead to intervention (e.g. through outside agencies), further monitoring, support and punitive sanctions as deemed necessary. Any necessary action should be taken until the bullying has stopped.

Prevention

- Children learn about bullying, feelings and relationships through weekly PSHE lessons.
- Children learn about cyber bullying and internet safety through weekly Computing lessons.
- A weekly celebration assembly promotes good manners and caring behaviour through positive reward systems such as gold stars (in class) and raffle tickets (around school).
- Worry/Feelings Boxes are available for all children to use.
- All staff members are made aware of the potential for peer-on-peer abuse between children.
- Key issues such as cyber bullying are highlighted in school's safeguarding policy.
- Children and their parents sign an acceptable usage agreement before being allowed access to school IT facilities which outlines their responsibilities as technology users.
- All staff record concerns and incidents on CPOMs.

Supporting Victims

1. Listen to what is being reported.
2. Keep a detailed record of what is being reported.
3. Treat anxiety seriously.
4. Explore the incident in detail to find out if it was an isolated incident or a repeated act.
5. Give reassurance to the victim that action will be taken.
6. Contact parents if necessary and invite them to discuss the incident.
7. Give the victim the opportunity to talk about what has happened with a trusted/familiar member of staff or counsellor.

Parents and Carers

Where parents and carers are concerned or suspect that their child is a victim of bullying behaviour, they should contact their child's class teacher, a senior member of staff or the school office as soon as possible.

Additional Advice and Help

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0300 0115 142 or visit www.ace-ed.org.uk
Children's Legal Centre	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline	020 7730 3300 or visit www.kidscape.org.uk
Family Lives (Parentline Plus)	0808 800 2222
Bullying UK	www.bullying.co.uk
NSPCC	www.nspcc.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Thinkuknow (cyber bullying)	www.thinkuknow.co.uk