

CULVERHILL SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

"South Gloucestershire Local Education Authority respects and celebrates the diversity of individuals within its community and recognises their unique value and right to a safe, secure and appropriate learning environment."

(LEA Policy Guidelines on Combating Bullying - December 2001)

Culverhill School shares this key principle and seeks to work with parents and professionals to value individuals and develop potential within a climate of mutual respect and understanding where the viewpoint and concerns of individuals are heard and taken seriously.

We aim to create a positive and inclusive school ethos where all adults in the school treat each other, parents, and pupils, with respect and understanding, even in situations that are stressful and difficult. The concerns of staff, pupils and parents will be listened to and taken seriously regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability or special educational needs. Children learn a great deal about how they should behave towards others by observing the behaviour of significant adults in their environment - we need to set them a good example.

In addition pupils will be positively taught to treat each other with kindness and consideration, and these behaviours valued and rewarded with attention and praise, certificates, raffle tickets, messages home etc.

Understanding of feeling and emotions, and how to talk about them, are taught in everyday contacts, and in planned activities such as PSHE and SEAL lessons. The niggling 'low level' bullying or 'teasing' such as unkind personal remarks, name-calling, etc. will not be tolerated but dealt with immediately under the assertive discipline system.

Pupils will be taught about differences within the school community through the use of leaflets (SLCN, ADHD, Emotional Needs, Autism and LD's) that are written in pupil speak and help pupils understand different learning needs.

If everyone is valued and "included" in the school community it is much less likely that anyone will be identified as "different" and become a

focus for bullying or that others will resort to bullying as a successful social strategy. This positive approach also raises the self-esteem of adults and pupils alike, making achievement and attainment much more likely.

What is bullying?

Bullying is an aspect of social behaviour that occurs in a wide variety of settings.

At Culverhill our definition of bullying is:

"behaviour that intentionally hurts or harms another person(s) and is repeated persistently over time"

The behaviour is usually unprovoked and there is generally an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim.

An argument between acquaintances that develops into a fight would not be regarded as bullying (although it could be regarded as assault and will be taken seriously). However if one individual is clearly dominant, and returns persistently to the argument thus provoking further fights, this could be regarded as bullying.

Bullying issues between adults in the workplace context are handled through the grievance (complaints) and disciplinary procedures. Bullying of a pupil by school staff is professional misconduct and will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. Consideration will always be given as to whether the behaviour has caused significant harm to the pupil, and should therefore be dealt with as a Child Protection matter.

The Head teacher will deal with bullying of school staff by a pupil and exclusion procedures may be applied.

Bullying between pupils requires prompt identification, clear lines of communication, and a shared understanding of procedures in order to deal with it effectively.

Common bullying behaviour includes:

- Name-calling
- Spreading rumours about someone
- Leaving an individual out of things/isolating them (indirect bullying)
- Making fun of someone's characteristics
- Offensive text messages by mobile phone

- Threatening verbal behaviour or physical aggression

Identification

Parents/Carers and staff are encouraged to monitor pupils for the following possible effects of bullying:

- Pupils becoming anxious and insecure
- Pupils being unhappy and losing self-esteem
- Pupils who are lonely and neglected/rejected by peers
- Pupils who have high levels of ill health and poor attendance at school
- Pupils whose academic progress is suffering
- Pupils who appear depressed

Communication

Staff

- Any member of staff who suspects a pupil may be a victim of bullying must report their suspicions to the child's class teacher
- Observed incidents must be recorded on the school's incident sheets and copies put into each pupil's file
- Class teacher to talk to both pupils and collate information from other staff
- Class teacher to meet with a member of the school's senior management team to discuss and agree the most appropriate strategy for dealing with the behaviour - record as an action plan and place copy in child's file
- SLT/Class teacher to discuss plan with Head teacher
- Class teacher to contact both sets of parents/carers concerned to raise awareness and share information
- Consideration needs to be given to what intervention is required in order to prevent the bully from re-offending as well as what support the victim needs (sanctions may range from those normally applied under the AD system, meetings with parents, the implementation of a behaviour plan, to the application of exclusion procedures)
- Class teacher to talk to parents/carers about the strategy to be used and agree a date for reviewing the situation
- If a child is 'looked after' the social worker will need to be kept informed and invited to meetings
- Class teacher to provide update for all staff (including SMSAs) and monitor situation (specific interventions can be recorded on AD sheet)
- Class teacher and member of SLT meet to review progress and evaluate outcomes

- Feedback is shared with parents/carers by agreed date and next steps agreed (the bullied child needs to be involved in this joint meeting between home/school)
- If school staff feel that they or the parents need additional support to resolve the bullying issues, then the Education Welfare Service or other central service staff can be involved
- A written record of interviews, discussions with children and telephone calls must be kept
- Class teacher feeds information back to all staff
- Staff need to be sensitive to the feelings of parents who have children who are being bullied or who are bullies, and maintain a calm, reassuring manner which respects and empathises with the feelings of parents
- At no stage should the parent be made to feel they are to blame or be faced with disbelief or hostility
- Staff need to keep an open mind - bullying can be hard to detect

Pupils

- All pupils learn anti-bullying strategies within PSHE lessons and are encouraged to support each other (this work is revisited on an annual basis in an Anti Bullying week)
- All pupils have the opportunity to share their feelings with their class teacher on a daily basis but can ask to speak to any member of staff they trust
- Pupils learn to express feelings through circle time and social skills lessons
- Pupils can refer bullying problems to the school council

Parents

Please help us by:

- Talking to your child regularly about school and listen carefully to what they say
- Being alert to changes in mood or behaviour related to school
- Encouraging your child to get to know the other pupils in his/her group and to take part in circle time and other discussion times that help them to understand feelings
- Telling them to keep the school rules and say nice things about other people and never to make hurtful comments even as a joke
- Telling them to tell an adult if they or someone else is being bullied and not to join in bullying or be a bystander
- Telling them not to keep worries to themselves and reassure them

- Staying calm even if you are concerned
- Contacting your child's teacher to discuss your worries
- Giving the school time to address the concerns
- Contacting the head teacher if you are unhappy with how your child's particular circumstances are being handled

Every opportunity will be taken by school staff to teach pupils how to keep safe. PSHE lessons will include how to stay safe and healthy physically and emotionally as well as what to do if you are being bullied. ICT lessons will teach pupils how to stay safe online and protect themselves from cyberbullying.

This policy is to be agreed by staff and governors and will be reviewed every 2 years or as the need arises.

Reviewed by Sarah Holt PSHE Subject Leader and governors 11/6/15