

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
MILES COVERDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

2009

ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

Mission statement

We aim to serve this community by providing an excellent education for all our pupils. We believe that children learn best if they are happy, confident, secure and actively engaged in their learning. We aim to create an environment where expectations are high and clear boundaries are set. Pupils are supported to work and play co-operatively.

We aim to:

- ✚ Create an atmosphere that is caring and welcoming to all pupils, parents and other members of the community and a sense of excitement and enjoyment in learning.
- ✚ Offer a curriculum, which will encourage academic, aesthetic, physical, social and emotional and spiritual development, ensuring that the children are given the opportunity to acquire basic skills essential for further learning.
- ✚ Encourage pupils to take pride in their work, aim for the highest possible standards and derive satisfaction for their own achievements and achievements of others.
- ✚ Help pupils develop self-control, co-operation, perseverance and a toleration of ideas and values different from their own.
- ✚ Encourage all pupils to behave with courtesy, care and respect both towards one another and to all adults.

Equality of opportunity

It is not enough to provide a curriculum and leave children to benefit from it. The school's role is to promote access to it and development through it. An accessible curriculum will have elements in it that attract all children, because they are recognised by all.

Equality of contribution

Children do more than receive knowledge; they contribute themselves to the process of education by bringing to it their own cultural experiences, values and perspectives. Schools must utilise such contributions in the learning process.

Equality of esteem

Children need to be visibly shown esteem as individuals, children and family members in order to develop self-esteem. The partnership between parent and school in the education of the child will be particularly important.

Racial equality statement

Miles Coverdale Primary School is committed to an inclusive ethos based on respect for, and celebration of, ethnic diversity. The school strives to prepare all pupils for living in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society. The school will strive to promote race equality in all dimensions of the school's life and community.

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At Miles Coverdale Primary School we believe that every child and adult in the school should be able to work and study in a bully-free environment. Everyone should feel confident when coming to school that they can spend the day in a friendly place where we're all working together to help one another. When bullying does occur (please see definition below) staff and pupils should feel confident to report the behaviour enabling the system to be put into place to prevent it from happening again.

Ours is a happy school and we endeavour to keep it as such.

Review process

This policy is reviewed annually.

What is bullying? – a definition

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting or intimidating another person. It can be emotional, physical, through racist taunting, of a sexual nature, homophobic, or verbal name-calling.

Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting

Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racist – taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic- focussing on the issue of sexuality

Verbal name-calling – sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Procedures for addressing

All accusations of bullying should be taken seriously. There are a variety of reasons why children and adults bully one another. Time should be spent not only with the victim but also considering the reasons why a child becomes a bully. There are ideal times during the school week when issues related to bullying can be discussed in class. These include:

Circle time is the perfect opportunity for class discussion on issues relating to bullying and why people bully and are bullied

PHSE & Citizenship

Discussions about bullying are part of our rolling programme as identified on the schemes of work.

Our school culture

It is important that we set a good example as adults in and around the school. The way we work with one another and our own productive and supportive relationships will provide a model for children. In the teacher/ child relationship we should also be alert to how we address children, the language and tone that we use and the response that we expect.

A general tone of respect around the school where care and consideration is expressed for others is part of building a culture in which bullying can be acknowledged and dealt with.

Consultation and Schools Council

Schools Council provides an opportunity for children to raise the issue of bullying generally. Children in school should be encouraged to approach members of Schools Council where they are worried or wish to raise a general or specific issue.

Children are consulted annually about school and any concerns they have. These consultations include :

A full survey of all children (conducted annually)

Consultation with Schools Council (conducted annually when the survey is not applied)

Informal discussion with children by headteacher and subject leaders

Procedures for dealing with reported incidents

The school behaviour policy should be followed in cases of reported incidents. This includes:

- The classteacher dealing with reports in the first instance
- The phase leader dealing with reports where the behaviour continues.
- Referral made to the Assistant Head/SENCO to address the behavioural, emotional and social development needs of the child and set appropriate targets with the class teacher, child and parent(s). Referrals may be made to outside agencies (e.g.Educational Psychologist, Primary Behaviour Team).
- Referral to the headteacher where interventions have failed to prevent repeats of the behaviour.

Depending upon the nature of the incident, children can be referred to the headteacher at any stage. Opportunity should be given for both victim and bully to express their versions and time taken to find out what instigates the behaviour.

Parents of both victim and bully can be informed at any stage in addition to the formal stage recorded above. Nurture staff and the pastoral care worker may be involved at any stage in spending time with the bully and the victim to work at the issues that have developed between them. At all times it should be stressed that bullying is not acceptable and that action will always be taken.

In addition we request classteachers:

- Reward children who help prevent bullying
- Emphasise that it is the bullying behaviour we dislike and not the child

- Involve children in helping to solve problems and address topical issues
- Develop children's social skills generally within the class
- Teach and encourage confidence-building and assertiveness
- Find constructive ways to help children who are bullying to change their behaviour.

Signs of bullying

We encourage children to report incidents of bullying either of themselves or of others. However, there are times when children will 'suffer in silence' out of fear of what might happen if the bullying is reported. Therefore, it is important that staff watch out for the following indicators in the behaviour of victims of bullying. The victim might be:

- frightened or unwilling to come to school
- absent from school more than usual
- withdrawn and anxious
- starting to stammer
- running away from school
- crying at night or having nightmares
- performing less well at school
- coming home with damaged belongings or has possessions going missing
- asking for money or stealing money
- losing money on a regular basis
- suffering from unexplained cuts and bruises
- becoming more aggressive and bullying others
- losing appetite or complaining of being hungry

Of course, there may be other reasons for this type of behaviour but bullying is always a possible cause.

Parental involvement

Children may make disclosures to parents at home or parents may notice changes in behaviour that are not evident in school. Parents should feel confident that they can come to school with their concerns and speak to either the class teacher or senior member of staff.

Actions should be agreed at this meeting and parents should be given feedback as to the outcome. They should also be encouraged to make further contact if the difficulty does not appear to have been addressed or the behaviour is being repeated.

We would always prefer that difficulties in relationships between children were sorted out in school. Parents are actively discouraged from intervening themselves.

Special Needs

Children with specific special needs may be particularly vulnerable to bullying activities. Staff should be vigilant for any changes in their behaviour and should provide regular opportunities for them to discuss any worries they might have. Once more, circle time discussions can provide opportunity for children to share the responsibility of looking after one another.

In some cases the case history of children may result in them exhibiting tendencies towards bullying behaviour. Where this is the case support should be provided for both the bully and the victim and opportunities sought to break the cycle that can result. Where children have experienced significant bullying at home, this can appear to be an accepted way to behave. This does not excuse bullying behaviour but can help explain its origins.

Equal opportunities

It should be noted that there is no one 'stereotypical bully'. Bullies can come in all shapes and sizes and most people at some stage will have been involved in a bullying incident. It is important that staff keep an open mind when dealing with allegations and should be clear of their evidence. However, there may also be times where children have to be given the benefit of the doubt, both for and against the bully where insufficient proof is available.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if legislation or practice should change significantly in the meantime.