



# Birdsedge

## First School

# Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2024

*The Staff and Governors are mindful of the responsibility of Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 which requires governing bodies to 'exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children'.*

### Rationale:

At Birdsedge First School, we aim to provide a safe and happy environment where both personal and emotional development, as well as physical and intellectual development are promoted and supported. Having both discipline and good learning behaviours are key to achievement and ensuring all pupils can reach their full potential.

The Education Act 2002 charges schools with the responsibility to "safeguard and promote the welfare" of children. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also gives school the responsibility to "prevent all forms of bullying." At Birdsedge we are committed to:

- Developing happy, confident children who care for each other and are aware of the effect of their behaviour on others.
- Producing a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and where children can feel confident that they will be listened to and treated fairly.
- Listening to both victims and accused.
- Establishing strategies with victims and perpetrators of bullying to help them overcome difficulties (See appendix 2)
- Establishing a consistent approach to instances of bullying
- Ensuring each member of our school is aware of their responsibilities in maintain a zero tolerance approach towards bullying in our school.



## **Aims:**

To ensure all children feel safe in an environment they can thrive in, we aim to first and foremost have a very proactive approach in how behaviour is managed to reduce to risk or chances of bullying behaviour occurring. We achieve this through:

- Develop within each child, a personal code of behaviour where consideration for others, sensitivity, truthfulness and integrity, are firmly valued, whatever the ability, sex, race or religion.
- Actively promote Fundamental British Values throughout school.
- Promote positive behaviour management with systems of rewards, celebrations and sanctions that support children to think and improve their behaviour.
- Praise and support each other to develop self-esteem and recognise good behaviours for learning
- Deal quickly and effectively, positively, sensitively and discreetly with any behaviour issues - keeping in mind the dignity and welfare of all concerned.
- Eradicate and deal quickly and effectively with bullying type behaviours before they escalate
- Encourage and help the children to take responsibility for their own behaviour and actions through developing a positive growth mindset.
- Whole school weekly PSHE Assemblies are used to promote tolerance, respect, and good behaviour and to address specific issues as they arise.
- Children learn best and enjoy higher self-esteem when the curriculum is relevant, interesting, well-structured and organised.
- We encourage children to think creatively and critically, to solve problems and to respond positively to risk and change.
- We work hard to develop a school ethos where children are valued and listened to, where they value and care for others, where they feel safe and where their rights and responsibilities are clear
- When children display inappropriate behavior we use restorative practices to enable children to develop empathy and begin to understand the impact of their actions on others and to accept responsibility.
- All classes have clear rules which the children agree to and are expected to keep
- Staff have a consistent approach when dealing with children and incidents

## **Definitions**

It is important that everyone in our school community understands what we define as bullying, as so this can be dealt with appropriately.

Bullying takes many forms, but generally involves actions taken with the deliberate intention of hurting someone physically or emotionally and carried out systematically over a period of time.

- Bullying behaviour is always unacceptable.
- Bullying can be a covert activity, unseen by adults. Victims and witnesses can be reluctant to come forward.
- Bullying can be linked to self-esteem. Those who bully often have underlying issues that make them behave in this way: they need our support to change their behaviour. Those who are bullied are always negatively affected, and it makes them unhappy: their learning suffers and they are often unable to do the things they enjoy. They need our support to overcome these effects.
- There are different bullying relationships: Pupil on pupil Pupil on staff Staff/adult on pupil
- The school uses a range of opportunities eg PSHCE lessons and activities, circle time and assemblies to promote a common understanding of what constitutes bullying and what does not.
- School recognises that there are different types of bullying (see appendix 1 )

1. General: how bullying is carried out:

- a) Direct-physical, verbal and non-verbal
- b) Indirect-cyber bullying (see appendix 4)

2. Specific: why bullying is carried out: People are bullied for many reasons, or no reasons. Bullying can relate to "difference"-real or imagined.

- a) Appearance
- b) Actions/Responses
- c) Health
- d) Family or social circumstances eg looked after: young carers
- e) Social class
- f) Race, religion or culture
- g) Disability/ SN h) Homophobia/Sexual orientation
- i) Gender-sexism and sexual

### **Responsibilities**

Bullying behaviour should never be ignored and it is the responsibility of all members of the school community to report incidents of bullying, and concerns they may have that someone is being bullied.

#### a) Governors

The school governing body is responsible for the Anti-Bullying Policy, and for ensuring that it is regularly monitored and reviewed.

The governing body will:

- Support the headteacher and the staff in the implementation of this policy.
- Be fully informed on matters concerning anti-bullying.
- Regularly monitor incident reports and actions taken to be aware of the effectiveness of this policy
- Appoint a member of the governing body to have a specific responsibility for anti-bullying

#### b). Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the Anti-Bullying Policy and under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for “--- encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils”

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- bullying behaviour is addressed in the whole school behaviour policy
- bullying is addressed as an issue in the curriculum
- the governing body is regularly provided with information regarding issues concerning behaviour management including bullying
- a senior staff member is appointed to be responsible for the monitoring of the policy and anti-bullying strategies. At Birdsedge this is the Headteacher.
- Support for parents is given should bullying occur outside school and in some circumstances, where the behaviour is affecting a child in school, an intervention plan may be the result. In serious circumstances the Headteacher reserves the right to seek advice regarding incidents of bullying from other agencies including the police.

#### c). Staff

Staff have a vital role to play as they are at the forefront of behaviour management and supporting children’s sense of personal safety and well being in school. They have the closest knowledge of the children in their care and should build up a relationship involving mutual support, trust and respect.

All members of staff will:

- Provide children with a good role model
- Provide children with a framework of behaviour including class rules which supports the whole school policy.
- Emphasise and behave in a respectful and caring manner to children and colleagues, to set a good tone and help create a positive atmosphere.
- Always be aware and take action when there are concerns about bullying
- Inform parents of any concerns regarding bullying
- Report and record all allegations of bullying following the school’s procedures
- Ensure children, and where appropriate parents / carers, are given regular feedback on the action been taken

#### d). Parents/Carers

We expect that parents/carers will understand and be engaged in everything that is being done to make sure their child enjoys and is safe at school and that they will support us in helping us meet our aims. We want them to feel confident that everything is being done to make sure their child is happy and safe at school.

We expect parents / carers to:

- Be fully involved in any aspect of their child's behaviour.
- Contact the school immediately if they know or suspect that their child is being bullied, even if their child has asked for "secrecy", and work in partnership with the school to bring an end to the bullying
- Contact the school if they know or suspect that their child is bullying another pupil
- Share with the school any suspicions they have that bullying is taking place even when it does not directly involve their child. When a parent /carer has concerns relating to bullying they should report them in the first instance to the class teacher.

#### e). Pupils

We want our children to feel safe and confident that everything is being done to make school a safe and secure environment for them to achieve and learn. We want our children to feel that they are supported in reporting incidents of bullying and reassured that action regarding bullying will take place. We want our children to know what to do if they are being bullied or are worried that someone else is being bullied.

We expect that children:

- will support the Headteacher and staff in the implementation of the policy
- will not bully anyone else, or encourage and support bullying by others
- will tell an adult if they are being bullied, usually either a member of staff or parent
- will act to prevent and stop bullying, usually this is through telling an adult if they know or suspect that someone else is being bullied Children must recognise that being a "bystander" is not acceptable, and understand how their silence supports bullying and makes them in part responsible for what happens to the victim of bullying.

#### **Signs and Symptoms**

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

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- wants to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work

has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"

- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- change in attitude to people at home.

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

## **Dealing with bullying**

All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher or by the Headteacher. Parents of the victim may also be questioned about the incident or about their general concerns. The alleged perpetrator and the victim will be talked to separately initially to establish the facts. Once these have been established a meeting may be set up between the 2 parties with the alleged perpetrator being asked to genuinely apologise and where possible the children will be reconciled.

Other consequences may take place for example parents being informed about their child's behaviour, loss of privilege eg playtimes and lunchtime. At the meeting between the victim and the perpetrator restorative justice strategies will be used. The aim being for the perpetrator to recognise the impact his/her behaviour is having on the victim and to understand the need for the behaviour to change. In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with bullying eg police, counsellor etc. A behaviour plan may be introduced which outlines expected behaviours and outcomes. In serious cases, fixed term or even permanent exclusion will be considered.

After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place. All reports of bullying will be addressed and the priority will be to support those being bullied and to stop the bullying. It is the responsibility of staff to assess the seriousness of the bullying and to determine the appropriate action that should be taken. We will work to help and support those responsible for the bullying to understand the impact of bullying and to change their behaviour. The first concern is the well being of the victim. Interventions may be necessary, but the ultimate aim is to stop the bullying. Those who bully also require support and we therefore avoid damaging labels of 'bullied' and 'bully' which can lead to lowered esteem and self-fulfilling predictions regarding future behaviour; preventing their understanding of the impact of their actions and hindering the development of more appropriate social skills that will modify their behaviour. A support assistant may be allocated to work with the perpetrator supporting them as they reflect on their behaviour, its impact and how they can change their behaviour for the benefit of themselves and others. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are recorded on a proforma by the class teacher. These are then shared with the Headteacher. The LTSAs will inform either the Class Teacher or the Headteacher of incidents of unacceptable behaviour and bullying at lunch times. All LTSAs will be informed of children whose behaviour is causing concern so as they can be monitored more closely.

Intervention is concerned with the actions the school takes after a bullying issue has been uncovered. This should involve:

- acknowledging the distress of bullied children and reassuring them that they are not to blame
- providing time for the victim to talk with an adult and to develop strategies (if required) for developing secure positive relationships with peers.
- confronting the bullying behaviour clearly, but going beyond mere application of sanctions; punishment alone can reinforce the idea that power is what matters and can also lead to an escalation and resentment building up; this in itself can lead to children becoming less willing to report bullying. Time may be set aside with a learning mentor/behaviour support worker or other adult for the perpetrator to talk about his/her actions, the impact they have had and future behaviour.
- closely monitoring the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Anti Bullying Policy will be reviewed annually. Parent's and pupil's views on the effectiveness of the policy and practice may be canvassed through the parent and pupil questionnaire. Related Policies which should be considered alongside this policy:

Teaching and Learning

Curriculum

Behaviour

Safeguarding/Child protection

SEND Policy

PSHE and RSE Policy

## Appendix 1-Forms of bullying

- Threats of or actual violence(verbal and non-verbal)
- Ignoring/shunning
- Teasing
- Name calling
- Interfering with other's property
- Racially offensive remarks/behaviour
- Incitement to commit an act of bullying
  - Graffiti designed to intimidate/ embarrass
- Ridiculing/mimicking/sarcasm
- Demanding money or favours through intimidation
- Damaging possessions/effects belonging to others
- Inappropriate body language, gestures, tone of voice. Falling out or having an argument with friends is not bullying.

Bullying is sustained and deliberate actions which happen over a period of time, rather than 'one off' events.

## Appendix 2- Some Strategies for Staff when Dealing with Bullying

- Reassure the victim that you can help them and that they have done the right thing by telling
- Establish events with the victim, any witnesses and the perpetrator (together or separately, as appropriate)
- Encourage expression of feelings and reasoning. Ensure that perpetrators know what they have done was inappropriate, and how it has affected the victim. Ensure that the victim knows that they are taken seriously, and that their complaint will be acted upon.
- Offer opportunities for victim and perpetrator to come together with support so that each sees the result of adult intervention and of their own actions.
- Monitor children openly or covertly, recording observations as relevant.
- Encourage perpetrators to think about consequences of actions, and offer them alternatives and choices.
- Criticise the behaviour and not the child. For every criticism, try to offer a positive comment. Use phrases like "You need to..." "I am glad you are..." "Thank you for..." (Guidance from an inclusion worker or using strategies from 'Butterfly' may be of help)
- Reinforce appropriate behaviour, drawing on other children as role models.
- Teach anger management strategies if appropriate, ( Make use of the book Starving the Anger Gremlin for ideas)
- Involve parents of both parties (victim and perpetrator) and/or other staff, to support appropriate behaviour and build self esteem, as well as to agree appropriate sanctions. Seek specialist support or advice as necessary. Provide parents with advice if requested as appropriate.
- Involve other children as special friends, supporting both parties at playtime or other trigger points during the school day. These children could award stickers, treasure etc for good behaviour or increased confidence. Also circle of friends strategy.
- Discourage troublesome groups/pairs by guiding them away from each other and towards more helpful friends.
- Offer victim or perpetrator a responsibility for something, as appropriate, to redirect behaviour or avoid trigger points.
- Agree targets, rewards and sanctions with perpetrator, and give regular feedback on their progress, both to themselves and to parents.
- Timeout.
- Use circle time to discuss issues.
- In extreme cases, the Headteacher may consider exclusion or the initiation of child protection procedures.

## Appendix 3- Parental Guidance

If you feel your child has been bullied:

- calmly talk with your child about his/her experience
- make a note of what your child says, particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened

- reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher immediately
- make an appointment to see your child's class teacher
- explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing

When talking with teachers about bullying:

- try to stay calm
- be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved
- make a note of what action the school intends to take
- ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
- stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue. If you are not satisfied Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by the school might like to consider the following steps:
- check with the school anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed
- make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher; keep a record of the meeting
- if this does not help, write to the Chair of governors explaining your concerns and what you would like to see happening
- contact the head of Kirklees Children and Young Peoples Service; the authority will be able to ensure that the Governors respond to your concerns.

All situations are dealt with sensitively however outcomes and sanctions remain confidential to the perpetrator and their parents/carers. If you need further support and information at any stage or the problem remains unresolved, ring the helpline at Parent line plus. If your child is bullying other children: Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying. Children sometimes bully others because

- they don't know it's wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire
- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings To stop your child from bullying others:
- talk with your child; explain that what he or she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's class teacher or form tutor; explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing; discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop him or her bullying others
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he or she is co-operative or kind to other people

Bullying by mobile phone text messages or e mail:

If your child experiences these kinds of bullying, a parent can:

- Inform their child's classteacher
- ensure the child is careful about who they give their mobile phone number or e mail address to check exactly when a threatening message was sent when necessary, report incidents to the police

#### Appendix 4- Birdsedge First School Anti Cyber Bullying Statement

This school believes that all people in our community have the right to teach and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We believe that every individual in school has a duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person.

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. Although there may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common.

1. Text messages —that are threatening or cause discomfort - also included here is "bluejacking" (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using "Bluetooth" wireless technology)
2. Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras, digital or web cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
3. Mobile phone calls — silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
4. Emails — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.
5. Chat-room bullying — menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based chat-room.
6. Instant messaging (IM) — unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Whatsapp, Viber – although there are others.
7. Bullying via websites — use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal "own web space" sites such as Bebo (which works by signing on in one's school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) and Myspace – although there are others.

At Birdledge First School, we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. An episode may result in a simple verbal warning. It might result in a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions in line with the school's anti-bullying policy

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe. Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages (POS - Parents Over Shoulder, TUL – Tell You Later) make it difficult for adults to recognise potential threats.

At Birdledge First School, pupils are taught how to:

- Understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyber-bullied.
- report any problems with cyber-bullying. If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents, the police, the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.

Birdledge First School has:

- Information for parents on e-communication standards and practices in schools, what to do if problems arise ,what's being taught in the curriculum
- Support for parents and pupils if cyber-bullying occurs by: assessing the harm caused
- Identifying those involved , taking steps to repair harm and to prevent recurrence