



Anti-Bullying Policy

2023 – 2024

Date to be reviewed: September 2024

Anti- Bullying Policy

Objectives

Lowerplace is a primary school with pupils for age 4 to 11 (Reception to Year 6). Here at Lowerplace we have very high expectations of behaviour and achievement and the aim of our school is to promote successful learning within a caring and warm atmosphere, where there is mutual respect for all. Despite our best efforts however, we are aware that bullying, in one form or another, can occasionally take place in schools and we will do our utmost to prevent/tackle this at Lowerplace.

Bullying will not be accepted at Lowerplace, a community in which we are committed to ensuring that all feel respected and valued.

“Bullying in any form is always unacceptable.”

What is Bullying?

Staff and Governors at Lowerplace Community Primary School accept the definition:

“Bullying is persistent behaviour by an individual or group which knowingly, deliberately and systematically causes/seeks to cause, or encourages others to cause, pain, distress, anxiety or fear to another individual or group whether physically, verbally or emotionally.”

Bullying is defined as:

“Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”.

DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”

Or

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as “the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another where the relationship involves an imbalance of power”.

There are different ways in which bullying takes place. The bullying in a school is usually done directly to the victim.

All bullying is “emotional” and plays on weakness: the imbalance of power.

Bullying consists of **REPEATED** deliberate acts done to cause distress. Bullying behaviour is carried out to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully / bullies.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, or any use of violence.
- **Racist:** racial name calling, graffiti, unacceptable gestures.
- **Homophobic:** homophobic name calling or graffiti
- **Verbal:** name calling, spreading rumours, teasing.
- **Sexual:** unwanted sexual contact, sexually abusive or comments.

- **Cyber/Online:** threats by text message, email misuse or social media misuse.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like mobile phones, computers, tablets, x box and PS4. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. It can also include the publication of embarrassing pictures or video clips on social media. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

- **Damage to Property or Theft:** children may have their property damaged, taken off them or stolen.
- **Child on child** – child on child abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age.

At Lowerplace, we understand that some pupils can be particularly vulnerable to bullying because of “differences”, real or perceived, and the differences that make them vulnerable. This is supported through assemblies and pastoral support as well as the daily interventions happening within school.

Real or perceived differences can relate to:

- Appearance
- Ability
- Health
- Family or home circumstances, e.g. looked after children or young carers
- Social class
- Race, religion or culture
- Disability / Special Educational Needs
- Sexual Orientation of either the pupil or members of their family
- Gender

Signs and Symptoms of bullying:

There may be signs or behaviours that indicate that a child is being bullied. These may be evident at home or at school or in both locations. Any adult who notices such signs or symptoms should investigate further and take action if necessary. They **may** include:

- Fear of going to or from school/ unwillingness to go to school/ asking to move school
- Feigned illness or an increase in complaints about feeling unwell
- Crying at bedtime or disturbed sleep (including nightmares)
- Arriving home with damaged clothes or property (e.g. torn books)
- Asking for money or stealing money
- Fear or reluctance to use the internet or mobile phone
- Being nervous or secretive when a text or e-mail is received
- Withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Becoming aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Unexplained cuts or bruises

Effects of Bullying

Bullying can affect pupils in a number of different ways. When pupils are bullied, their lives are made miserable; they may suffer injury or feel unhappy about coming to school. Over time, they may lose self-confidence and self-esteem, often blaming themselves for inviting bullying behaviour. Bullying may lead to feelings of anxiety or depression.

Anti-Bullying: Approaches and Objectives

Staff at Lowerplace work hard to promote a school wide ethos that reduces conflict and increases understanding, tolerance and respect of others.

What do we do as a school to prevent bullying?

We want all our pupils to understand the nature of bullying and the effects it has. We want children to know that bullying in any form is not acceptable, and that they must report it immediately if they or anyone else is being bullied. We want them to know that it is not acceptable for anyone to encourage bullying by others and not acceptable to do nothing if they know it is taking place.

In school we work hard to prevent bullying taking place. Some of the ways we do this are:

- Using assemblies to talk about bullying and give out key messages.
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying Week.
- Constantly reviewing and analysing all behaviour incidents - this includes bullying type behaviours.
- Analysing termly report of racist and homophobic incident to the Local Authority.
- Ensuring that the curriculum for PSHE, HRE, citizenship, religious education and other curriculum areas, is one that promotes respect for all and is underpinned by Lowerplace core values.
- Lessons, as part of our PSHE sessions, explicitly discuss bullying and inappropriate behaviours.
- School, classroom and playground rules make clear the behaviour we expect, and we use our systems for rewards and sanctions consistently across school.
- We recognise the importance of the physical organisation of our school and the organisation of breaktimes and lunchtimes. Staffing ratios are high at these times and SLT and pastoral staff are available to all children during these times.
- Pastoral Drop-ins are available for any child if requested.
- We take an emotional register twice a day to establish anxiety levels and this is followed up immediately by classroom staff.
- Our whole school ethos is built around caring or one another in the 'Lowerplace Family' and we encourage empathy and insight into the feelings of others.
- We work hard to develop trust amongst pupils and staff, in the hopes that worries and concerns will willingly be shared with us.

What do we do as a school when bullying takes place?

Parents can be assured that the school takes all reports of bullying very seriously. Our priority will be to support those being bullied and to stop the bullying. It is the school's responsibility 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. We have to assess the seriousness by asking key questions such as:

- Was the act done on purpose knowing it would hurt?
- What was the actual hurt suffered?
- How many times has the bullying taken place?
- How long has the bullying been going on?
- Have those involved also bullied other pupils?
- Was there any provocation?

Anti-Bullying Procedures

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with initially by the class teacher. Depending upon the nature and the severity of the incident it may be referred to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and ultimately the Governors.

Incidents of bullying will be recorded and tracked in school. Once the bullying has been stopped and support put in place for the victim, attention will be given to supporting the perpetrator to understand the consequences of their actions. Behaviour support plans may be put in place if required.

Racist and homophobic incidents are logged and reported to the LA on a termly basis. Analysis of such incidents will determine if any additional interventions are required – these may be individual, group, class or whole school interventions. These may take the form of additional lessons or assemblies.

Consequences of bullying or racist or homophobic incidents may include a letter being issued (with a follow up conversation with parents) or, in more serious cases, may include a fixed term exclusion. Exact consequences will be determined by the nature and severity of the incident(s).

The anti-bullying policy is promoted in many different ways. At Lowerplace we use regular assemblies, curriculum content and consistent reinforcement from all staff to deliver the key messages. This may be done through role-plays, stories or direct messaging.

Playtime & Lunchtime Provision

Bullying or anti-social behaviour could take place out of the classroom and in the playground where it can be harder to spot. At Lowerplace, there are an appropriate number of classroom based staff supervising playtimes every morning. Staff are encouraged to move around the grounds, talk to pupils and anticipate any potential difficulties. If problems occur other staff may be involved or the pastoral team may be asked to assist in the situation. Playground Buddies and School Councillors also act as point of contact for each year group,

At Lowerplace, lunchtime is a valuable part of the school day. There are an appropriate number of Lunchtime Organisers and teaching assistants supervising the children over the lunchtime period members of SLT are also on duty. This ensures that behaviour expectations at lunchtime are in line with the rest of the school day. At lunch time, staff award Dojo points for good behaviour

Any incidents of poor behaviour are recorded on CPOMs and feedback to the classteacher. Behaviour logs are monitored by the Pastoral Team and shared with SLT.

Parental/Carer Involvement

Lowerplace School gives a high priority to clear communication within the school and promotes a positive partnership with parents. The SLT operate an 'open door' policy and are keen to discuss issues wherever possible. We feel that these links are crucial in promoting and maintaining a strong anti-bullying stance. The Headteacher and/or senior leaders are regularly outside on the playground/school grounds both before and after school.

Lowerplace School is keen to inform parents/carers of any bullying concerns at the earliest possible opportunity, therefore providing the opportunity for all parties to discuss the situation and decide upon an agreed plan of action. Similarly, the school encourages parents to inform the school of any issues that they feel may affect their child.

Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils/ Parents and all staff at Lowerplace School take a shared responsibility for promoting good behaviour and advocating anti bullying.

Children’s responsibilities are:

- To be proud to be a member of our school.
- To be polite, well behaved and courteous.
- To follow the class/school rules.
- To talk to someone if they feel worried, upset or concerned about anything.
- To understand that if they are involved in bullying or witnessing bullying without reporting the incident, it could lead to serious action.
- To treat everyone at our school with respect.
- To take responsibility for their own actions.

Staff responsibilities are:

- To uphold the Lowerplace values and whole school ethos and demonstrate this in their own manner and behaviour.
- To actively establish positive relationships with pupils and parents, building trust with all key stakeholders.
- To be available to children if they need to speak about their worries or concerns.
- To deal with any worries or concerns brought to their attention in a sensitive and caring manner.
- To respond to worries and concerns so children understand that they are being listened to.
- To share any reports of bullying with the appropriate staff.
- To record incidents on CPOMs.
- To follow up on incidents to show they are committed to supporting the child and, as a school, we are supportive of all children’s needs.
- To ensure consistency of approach across school.

Parent responsibilities are:

- To understand all children, parents, visitors and staff of Lowerplace Community Primary School should feel valued and safe.
- To support their child to participate in the life of the school and actively encourage their child with their learning.
- To report any worries or concerns to the school following the correct channels, e.g. informing the class teacher or a member of SLT, who will then record the concern and agree actions.
- To understand the impact that negative behaviours and bullying can have on an individual and support school in tackling any incidents of this.

Conclusion

The staff at Lowerplace School acknowledge the fact that an anti-bullying policy alone will not eradicate the potential of bullying. These are aspects of life that we believe can only be reduced through a consistent approach and an understanding of why it happens. This policy is intended to improve this understanding and make clear the agreed procedures and approaches to be taken by all staff at this school. By doing so we aim to reduce undesirable behaviour and promote a positive, happy and harmonious school.

To be read in conjunction with:

Behaviour Policy
Exclusions Guidance