



The Keys Academy Trust

Policy for Anti-bullying

Date: January 2016

Review: March 2018

The Coombes C of E Primary School
Policy for the Management of Bullying

1 - Introduction

The control of management of bullying is important for all schools, particularly in the light of recent high profile cases and court rulings which have emphasised schools' responsibilities and duty of care in this issue.

Therefore, this document sets out The Coombes school policy in relation to the issue of bullying. It reflects a belief that bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances (zero tolerance) and that it is best prevented through the development of a school ethos based on mutual respect, fairness and equality. Our home-school agreement includes the words "our commitment to ... provide a safe, happy and stimulating environment based on Christian values..."

2 - Aims

The aims of this policy are

- To fulfil the School's statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils;
- To clarify the School's responsibility for responding to incidents of bullying and to emphasise to staff, pupils and their parents and carers the School's zero tolerance attitude towards bullying behaviour.
- To eliminate intimidating behaviour and promote a school ethos in which each pupil is safe and able to realise their full potential.
- To address the problem of bullying and to bring it under control through the implementation of a whole-school policy.
- To reassure parents and carers that the School takes their children's welfare seriously and that they are being educated in a safe and secure environment.

3 - Key Points

(i) Definition

At The Coombes School we regard bullying as any interaction between an individual or group of people with a more powerful individual or group which is **perceived** or **intended** to cause hurt, pain, suffering, humiliation or degradation.

The behaviour is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time.

Bullying behaviour may be direct or indirect. Direct forms include

- Physical violence and threats;
- Verbal assaults and taunts;
- The destruction of property;
- Extortion;
- Unwanted physical contact.

Examples of indirect forms of bullying include

- Ignoring and the withdrawal of friendship;
- Excluding;
- Malicious gossip and spreading rumour;
- Abusive or oppressive graffiti.
- Cyberbullying.

We take all forms of bullying seriously.

(ii) Scope

This policy applies mainly to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises. The School is not **legally** responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere.

However, the school has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its pupils and will respond actively to any information it receives about bullying outside school. In such cases the following points would be considered: –

- If it emerges that a pupil is responsible for bullying other children outside school then this matter will be addressed and (if appropriate) the bully's parents informed.
- If a child is found to be a victim of bullying outside school then help and support will be offered and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The victim's parents will be informed.
- If there are more general concerns about children's safety outside school then the local police will be contacted and their help sought in making the area around the school premises more secure.
- If information is received that a child is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents. If concerns persist then the matter will be referred to the appropriate Social Services department.
- If children are being bullied by pupils of another school the Head of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

(iii) Prevention

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of children will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the school's policy of zero-tolerance consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will constantly reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

In addition the issue of bullying will be raised with pupils at a number of levels including:

- At whole school level – through assemblies when children will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. This issue will be raised regularly when the whole school will be informed of the progress of the anti-bullying policy and any changes which may be introduced.
- At classroom level – via circle time, projects, and PHSE/Citizenship initiatives.

- At individual level – children who are felt to be a risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance.

Children who have bullied others will be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to bring their unacceptable behaviour under control and to prevent further incidents.

We recognise that there are particular times when children may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements will be made to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.

Children will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is fully investigated.

Parents who believe their children are the victims of bullying should share their concerns with the school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with the school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Similarly if parents believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with the school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying child helped to change their behaviour.

All of these preventative strategies operate within a school ethos founded on equality, fairness and respect for others in which individual differences are celebrated and seen as a source of enrichment. In order to help children learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff at all times will treat each other, children, parents and carers with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

(iv) Parental Involvement

The Coombes School is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and wish, using the home/school agreement, to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator.

If a child is involved in a serious incident of bullying or there is evidence that the same child is involved repeatedly in less serious incidents (either as a victim or a perpetrator) the school will inform parents and invite them to become involved in the management of the problem and the prevention of further incidents. Isolated and less serious incidents will be managed by school staff and parents informed.

(v) Implementation

We are committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that a zero-tolerance policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of children will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall within the school's definition of bullying; will ensure that the victim receives the support that is required and that the bully is informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record made of the incident.

All children need to be aware that staff want to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.

(vi) Incident Management

The School will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff.

(vii) Post Incident Responses

For the Victim:-

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.

School Staff will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs. Immediate actions to stop the bullying and secure the child's safety may include:

- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents
- sympathy and empathy
- counselling
- befriending
- assertiveness training
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mediation/peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability)
- arrangements to review progress

For the Bully:-

St. Peter's staff take bullying very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way. We are of the view that the positive use of sanctions can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and in promoting change.

School staff will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. After immediate action to stop the bullying in progress the following options will be considered:-

- engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable
- a formal apology to the victim(s)
- loss of lunch/breaktime privileges
- daily/Head teacher's report
- removal from class/group
- withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not an essential part of curriculum)
- parents informed
- counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)
- fixed periods of exclusion
- permanent exclusion (in extreme cases which may involve violence)

- rewards/positive reinforcement for children in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control

(viii) Monitoring and Evaluating

Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded and the nature and elements of the bullying identified. This information will be shared with Governors via the Headteacher's report as and when appropriate.

Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and pupils.