

PONTARDDULAIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY ON BULLYING

What is bullying?

It is the willful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone.

Bullying is a complex problem, which arises in some form or other in all schools. The extent of the problem depends on many aspects such as:

- locality / social problems,
- school atmosphere and ethos,
- staff awareness,
- pupils reaction,

The Elements of Bullying

1. The Nature of Bullying.
Physical or verbal e.g. physical assault, name-calling, teasing, taunting, rude gestures, intimidation.
2. The Severity of Bullying.
This can range from just teasing to vicious assault.
3. The Frequency of Bullying.
Bullying can take place several times a week or day.
It can go on for months and even years.
4. The Motivation of Bullies.
The bully gets pleasure from other children's pain, fear and humiliation.

With young children, the following distinctions must be made: -

- Bullying or Bossiness.
- Bullying or Boisterous play.

The Numbers involved in Bullying.

Under this heading it is important to distinguish between direct and indirect bullying. i.e. between those who are bullies and victims, and the larger group of pupils who are onlookers.

Research shows that there are twice as many victims among boys than among girls, and three times as many boys are bullies. These trends may be misleading as boys are probably more prepared to admit to aggressive behaviour than girls because of the aggressive masculine image current in many societies.

In addition, the different means used by the sexes may make boy bullies more visible to adults. Both boys and girls use teasing as a means of bullying, but boys are more inclined to use physical means whereas girls are more inclined to use more subtle means, such as exclusion from the social group.

Many boy bullies pick on victims from both sexes but girls predominantly bully other girls.

The School's Anti - Bullying Strategy

The following guidelines provide a framework for changing attitudes towards bullying and help create an ethos that does not tolerate the oppression of one person by another.

Organisational Strategies

Whole-school strategies have been devised to combat bullying. We do not simply wait for it to happen; we assume that some pupils do have the inclination to bully others, and therefore we act to prevent and discourage it.

We ensure that there is a procedure to follow should bullying occur and that it is made explicit to all staff and pupils.

We follow up each case both to ensure that the victim is given as much support as possible and in order to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour.

We make clear to the parents of victims and bullies the actions we are taking, why we are doing so and what they can do to reinforce and support our actions.

We do not bully the bully. This gives credibility to the behaviour.

We ensure that all pupils have someone, usually the class teacher, to whom they may talk in confidence. Pupils and parents need to know that something will be done, and that the matter will be handled discreetly and sensitively.

Having considered the school's physical environment and general organization, we make sure that the playground, corridors, toilets and other hidden corners are regularly visited by school staff, Year 6 prefects and Playground Friends.

We involve all non-teaching staff in the discussion and implementation of the anti-bullying programme - e.g. Teaching Assistants, Lunchtime Supervisors, Canteen staff and the Road Crossing Patrol person.

The Curriculum

In our school a caring co-operative ethos is created through both personal and social behaviour. By drawing on incidents as they occur in the daily life of the class, teachers assume an increasing role in teaching social skills in a conscious and systematic way. 'Bullying' is tackled through the curriculum including PSE, Circle Time, P4C, Assemblies, and role-play.

Positive Steps

We aim to raise the self-esteem of the victims of bullying through activities, which are designed to improve their social skills. They receive support from teachers and other school staff, and parents are advised on how they can help their child.

We also show bullies that they can satisfy their needs through working with others rather than in confrontational or competitive ways. Their parents are drawn into the discussions of how to change their child's behaviour to conform to the school's ethos.

Advice and Guidance For Teachers

Watch for early signs of distress in pupils - deterioration of work, complaining of feeling unwell, isolation, the desire to remain with adults and erratic attendance. Whilst this behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems, it may be the early signs of bullying.

- Listen carefully to what the pupils say.
- Offer the victim immediate support and help by putting the school's procedure into operation.
- Make the unacceptable nature of the behaviour, and the consequences of any repetition, clear to the bully and his/her parents.
- Ensure that all accessible areas of the school are patrolled at break, lunchtime, between lessons and at the end of the day.

- Use all the pupils as a positive resource in countering bullying. Pupils can be used to help shy children or newcomers feel welcome and accepted.

For Pupils and Teachers

The following points are an important part of our whole-school policy and often form the basis of class discussions, Circle Time, P4C or School Council meetings. We use all pupils and teachers in our anti-bullying campaign to prevent or stop bullying.

When someone is being bullied or is in distress, take action. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bully. Pupils should inform an adult immediately.

Do not tolerate bullies in the same social group.

Only accept people who do not bully others. Bullies will soon stop if they are socially excluded.

Together devise ways of rewarding good behaviour. e.g. Going for Gold, house points, 'seren yr wythnos'.

Discuss class and school rules, and how everyone should respect and keep to these rules. Talk about the ways the school is promoting positive behaviour both in the playground and inside the school.

For Parents

Watch for signs of distress in your children. There could be an unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches or stomach aches, equipment that has gone missing, request for extra pocket money, damaged clothing or bruising.

Take an active interest in the child's social life. Discuss friendships, how playtime is spent and the journey to and from school.

If you think your child is being bullied inform the school immediately and ask for an appointment with the class teacher or head teacher.

It is important to provide supportive evidence regarding the incidents i.e. WHO, WHAT, WHERE and WHEN.

With the class or Headteacher, devise strategies that will help your child and provide her/him with support inside and outside school.

Support is also available from Parent Governors.

If the problem occurs outside school you should still contact the class/head teacher who will pursue the issue in school time.

Do not encourage your child to hit back. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to your child's nature. More positively, encourage your child to recruit friends. A child who has friends is less likely to be bullied.

For both Victims and Parents

The following guidelines are for parents who think that their son or daughter is being bullied.

First tell your son or daughter that there is nothing wrong with him / her.

He / she is not the only victim.

Advise your son or daughter not to hesitate to tell a responsible adult e.g. the class teacher.

Together identify those areas where the bullying takes place. Advise that he / she makes sure that there are other trusted people about.

Advise your son or daughter not to try and buy the bully off with sweets or other 'presents', and not to give in to demands for money.

Together with the class teacher, you and your son or daughter should work out a plan of action. Should the bullying be repeated the plan must be followed and an adult told that it has happened again.

Finally:

We are constantly reminding pupils that bullying is anti-social and not acceptable in our school. However, isolated incidents do take place. The staff encourages pupils to talk freely about problems of this kind.

It is only occasionally that problems are brought to our attention by parents. Members of staff or myself then usually sort these out quickly.

Our Behaviour Code complements this Bullying Policy and outlines the positive steps taken to promote good behaviour. It also spells out the sanctions imposed in the event of pupils breaking our school rules, which includes bullying.

This policy will be reviewed annually in consultation with staff, governors and all stakeholders.

Date: November 2011

Reviewed: November 2012

Signed:

Governors:

