

HORNDALE COUNTY INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Scholars Path, Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham DL5 7HB



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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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“Durham County Council seeks to provide a safe, secure and positive environment in which children and young people can develop and grow making full use of the range of facilities available to them.

Children, young people and adults involved with them are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding, and to participate in any activity free from intimidation.”

Introduction

Bullying can be defined as abuse of power over a period of time by an individual or group against other individuals who are unable to retaliate because of personality or circumstance in order to cause distress.

Bullying can take many forms:

- ◆ physical - hitting, kicking and taking belongings;
- ◆ verbal - name calling, insulting, racist remarks, homophobic remarks;
- ◆ indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding one from social groups.
- ◆ Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- ◆ Cyber-bullying - all areas of internet, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

Bullying is not:

- ◆ Having an argument with someone who may or may not be a friend
- ◆ Having a fight with someone
- ◆ Falling out with friends, even if that makes you unhappy saying something bad to someone when you are angry.

We do not imply that the above cannot be distressing, and may have to be dealt with sympathetically and or firmly. **However, they do not constitute bullying.**

Aims

It is the aim of our school that our children should learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment where they have no fear of being bullied.

Bullying is antisocial behaviour which affects everyone. Such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We aim to provide a curriculum which in promoting personal and social development will reduce the chances that children’s education will be interrupted or impaired by fear of bullying. We aim to:-

- ◆ To enable pupils to understand the society they live in and help them to learn about their own responsibilities within it.
- ◆ To help prepare pupils for life after school by encouraging them to be responsible and caring individuals.
- ◆ To provide a supportive environment which will provide children with appropriate strategies for dealing with intimidating behaviour.

Horndale School provides rules and directions that clearly define the limits of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour through the implementation of the Behaviour Policy.

Ethos

The whole ethos of the school in general promotes a learning environment where each child is valued and encouraged to value the contribution of others. Praise and positive rewards provide an incentive for acceptable behaviour patterns.

Horndale staff endeavour to instil in the children a clear vision of our school values in life both within school and society. These include:

- ◆ respect
- ◆ equality
- ◆ happiness
- ◆ kindness
- ◆ confidence
- ◆ honesty

This is achieved by:

- ◆ fostering a strong sense of community and encouraging a high level of co-operation between staff and pupils where children feel able to relate to adults with ease and confidence;
- ◆ encouraging children to think of strategies to make new pupils welcome in a class/school, thus ensuring that potential bullies and inappropriate behaviour are discouraged;
- ◆ providing a whole school Behaviour Policy plan which consists of -
 - ◆ rules that must be followed at all times
 - ◆ positive recognition that children will receive for following the rules
 - ◆ consequences that result when children choose not to follow the rules (refer to Behaviour policy).

Curriculum

Built into PSHCE planning are elements which specifically place emphasis on the need for kindness, tolerance and respect for people. Work on relationships includes discussions on different types of teasing and bullying, teaching that bullying is wrong and informing children of how to get help in dealing with bullying if it should occur.

The curriculum is the vehicle through which personal relationships can be given a context and meaning. Personal development should not merely be limited to assemblies, acts of worship or R.E. lessons but included in teaching across all areas of the curriculum.

The curriculum can be used to:

- ◆ raise awareness about bullying behaviour and about the school's anti-bullying policy and;
- ◆ challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils, and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

Many subject areas within the existing curriculum promote anti-bullying values and co-operative behaviour.

This may be achieved directly through reference to individual or group behaviour and its impact on others, as illustrated by, for example, an incident in history, current affairs or fictional account.

Alternatively, it could be achieved indirectly through the selection of curriculum approaches which require pupils to work together co-operatively and which include regular opportunities for personal evaluation and reflection on how effectively each pupil has worked with others and how interaction could be improved. Activities which are based on group tasks, experiments and investigations offer plenty of existing opportunities for this kind of personal and social development.

Through the curriculum it is possible to explore issues such as:

- ◆ What is bullying?
- ◆ What causes people to bully each other?
- ◆ How does it feel to be bullied/to bully?
- ◆ What are the effects of bullying behaviour on bullied pupils, on pupils who bully others, on bystanders?
- ◆ What would our school (our society) be like if bullying behaviour was acceptable?
- ◆ Why should we try not to bully each other?
- ◆ What can we do to stop bullying?
- ◆ What moral dilemmas do we face when we are confronted with bullying behaviour?

Homophobic Incidents

The whole school recognises that homophobia is an unacceptable dislike or fear of someone who is, or is believed to be, lesbian, gay or bisexual. We acknowledge that a homophobic incident is any incident perceived to be homophobic by the victim or another person such incidents can be directed against both heterosexual and same sex attracted people and can affect pupils, staff and parents.

As a whole school we take a range of actions to promote more tolerant attitudes.

All staff are aware that the school may be the initial point of contact for children and young people who are questioning their sexuality and as such may feel reluctant to seek or want parental involvement.

Whilst homophobia should not be tolerated, a sensitive approach is required to enable both young people and staff to feel comfortable with the way it is addressed and that they can talk openly and honestly about it.

Racist Incidents

The whole school recognises that racism is unacceptable behaviour.

A racist incident is defined as any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person or persons.

As a school we acknowledge that racial harassment is unacceptable and this can be any form of behaviour that has the effect of intimidating, humiliating, ridiculing and/or undermining the confidence of a person or group of people due to their colour, nationality or ethnic group.

Procedures for investigating incidents

All staff need to know how to respond to a bullying incident. Direct action against bullying should occur within a context which reminds all pupils that bullying behaviour is unacceptable to the school and will not be tolerated.

Discussing bullying incidents with pupils.

Children involved in bullying others may feel quite justified in their actions, and may be reluctant to admit to them. Some children may even make false allegations of bullying against a fellow pupil to get them into trouble. It can be difficult for teaching or supervisory staff to build an accurate picture of events or to be sure of who is telling the truth. Class teachers can often build upon their special relationship with individual pupils to encourage honest and direct discussion.

If the incident is not too serious, a 'problem solving' approach may help. The adult tries to remain neutral and deliberately avoids direct, closed questions which might be perceived as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil has an opportunity to talk and the discussion is focused on finding a solution and stopping the bullying from re-occurring.

Monitoring and recording incidents

However if bullying does occur, whether reported or suspected, it will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached. The incident will be record via CPOMS and reported to the Head Teacher who will talk to all concerned. If the behaviour persists, parents will be informed.

Monitoring takes account of:

- ◆ Who was involved (or alleged to be involved);
- ◆ Where and when it happened;
- ◆ What happened;
- ◆ What action was taken;
- ◆ How it was followed up.

The monitoring system involves all teaching and non-teaching staff and directly relates to the Behaviour Policy.

If bullying behaviour continues after warnings, then children may for example lose their playtime. Class circle times may be involved in decisions relating to bullying issues, and parents may be involved so that the idea is reinforced at home.

Information on the number and type of both racist and homophobic incidents in school must now be reported to the Governors in termly meetings.

Parental involvement

All Horndale Infant and Nursery School parents are issued detailed guidelines incorporating their support of the Behaviour Policy. The programme clearly defines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The emphasis of the programme is to recognise and reward acceptable behaviour. Rewards are taken home to be shared with parents. Conversely a clearly defined procedure is in place for dealing with unacceptable behaviour (including bullying) culminating in support from parents being sought.

Role of Co-ordinator

It is the class teacher's responsibility to initially investigate incidents of bullying (or alleged incidents). These are recorded on CPOMS by class teachers and used for reference purposes to monitor incidents of inappropriate behaviour over a period of time. Areas of concern are monitored and reported to the Head Teacher for further investigation.

CPD

All members of teaching and non-teaching staff will have the opportunity to develop their own skills and knowledge by attending relevant courses.

Governors and parents

The school will ensure that the governors are kept informed of the school policy and relevant developments. The policy will be made available to parents on the school website.

Review

This policy will be updated in light of any new relevant information given to schools.

