



Goose Green Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Date: January 2024

Review date: January 2025

Introduction

At Goose Green Primary School we want all children to thrive in a school environment, where they feel safe and happy. If we discover bullying or an act of intimidation has taken place, we will act immediately to stop any further occurrences. While it is very difficult to eliminate bullying completely, we will do everything in our power to ensure that everyone's school experience is free from fear.

Aims of the Policy

At Goose Green we take all forms of conflict, friendship problems, and bullying behaviour seriously.

The aims of the policy are therefore:

- To support our school values of ambition, curiosity, kindness and resilience.
- To ensure a school environment that is safe and secure, built on trust, that encourages children to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour with a trusted adult.
- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour within and beyond our school community.
- To outline clear procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To outline clear procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour.
- To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To ensure everyone is mutually valued and respected regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, beliefs and ability.

Definition

We understand that both friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting and unpleasant but it is important to be aware of the difference between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Friendship problems may be an occasional incident where both children disagree and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. It is unlikely to be repeated behaviour. In these situations, the class teacher or supervising adult will help the children work through the problem using restorative conversations; with the hope that children will be able to use steps in the future to solve friendship problems independently. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviour is defined as - "Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online" (Anti-Bullying Alliance).

Occasionally, an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be particularly considered in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying and when children with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger, then intervention will be urgently required.

Bullying can include:

- Name calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making offensive comments
- Physical aggression, eg kicking, hitting, pushing
- Taking belongings
- Excluding people from groups
- Spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours.

Bullying can also happen online. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

We recognise bullying as a form of child on child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development. More information on child on child abuse can be found on this link to the NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2022/how-safe/>

Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
- Bullying of parents/carers by other parents/carers
- Bullying of school staff by parents/carers
- Bullying of parents/carers by staff
- Bullying of school staff by other school staff
- Prejudicial bullying related to:
 - race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - ethnicity, nationality or culture

- Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
- sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
- gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
- teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

Signs of bullying

Children may be reluctant to tell anyone they are being bullied, however there are often signs we can look for:

- Obvious distress, such as tearfulness or persistently looking unhappy
- Unwillingness to come to school
- Frequent headaches, stomach aches or complaints of feeling unwell
- Isolation from other children/not “joining in”
- A sudden deterioration in the standard of work
- Reluctance to leave the classroom at breaktimes or at the end of the day
- A tendency to stay close to staff during breaks
- Uncharacteristic behaviour
- General unhappiness/anxiety/fear
- Speaking negatively about, or behaving negatively towards, themselves

Practices and strategies to reduce incidents of bullying

Research shows that building a positive school environment and advancing social and emotional learning can have an impact on reducing bullying within a setting. The Department of Education’s “Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying case studies” (June 2018) found common themes across schools to support the prevention of bullying and a focus on preventative practices.

These include:

- A whole school approach
 - We have clear values that underpin everything that we do at Goose Green. These are ambition, curiosity, kindness and ambition, and these values are recognised, developed and celebrated throughout the school day.
 - Our Behaviour and Motivation Policy and our Anti-Bullying policy sets our clear processes for identifying and addressing bullying and our system of consequences/sanctions.
 - All staff are trained and supported to engage with our anti-bullying approach, so that they can model expected behaviour and are able to effectively deal with incidents
- Focus on preventative practice
 - We focus on positive behaviours and attitudes as reflected in our behaviour policy.

- Our curriculum has been designed to build empathy and understanding for others, to become creative and critical thinkers, and to be active and responsible citizens
- It specifically teaches children about healthy relationships and what to do if something doesn't feel right through PSHE, RSE and online safety lessons
- Creating an inclusive environment
 - Our curriculum celebrates our diverse community, so all children are aware they belong at Goose Green.
 - We promote the careful use of language, helping children to recognise the power of language and how to challenge and report 'banter' and prejudicial language.
- Keeping anti-bullying a high profile
 - We taking part in anti-bullying weeks, and also return to the theme of anti-bullying throughout the year through our curriculum and through celebration assemblies around key events in the calendar, including Pride and Black History Month.
 - We have an anti-bullying display that children regularly pass and we also display anti-bullying posters created by students.
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- Empowering pupils
 - At Goose Green, we give our students a voice, including having a student council, peer mentors and worry boxes in each class.
 - Our peer mentors are involved with supporting their peers during playtime and being a safe person so everyone has someone to talk and play with.
 - We also encourage all children to be *upstanders* rather than bystanders, so they understand they have a responsibility to support someone who is being bullied.
 - Our students are given the key phrase to use when they are unhappy or uncomfortable with someone else's behavior towards them "Please stop. I don't like it."
- A rapid response to bullying incidents
 - A culture of listening to concerns from children and parents/carers and responding quickly to them
 - Providing a variety of ways for children and families to report incidents or raise concerns
 - Using a restorative approach wherever possible so that those involved can acknowledge the impact of their actions and take steps to put it right.

Responding to bullying

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The person carrying out the bullying behaviours will be spoken to privately and without humiliation.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm.
- The class teacher or a member of the School Leadership Team will interview all parties involved.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers/staff are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with our child protection and behaviour policies.
- Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- A clear and precise account of the bullying incident(s) will be recorded by the school on CPOMS. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken. This ensures that all safeguarding leads and the children's classroom adults are aware of the incident and can monitor the impact of the actions taken, and identify any further instances of bullying behaviours involving the children so that they can be quickly addressed.

Strategies to support the person who has been bullied:

- When the child is ready, restorative conversations led by class teacher or member of Senior Leadership can be held between the victim and the perpetrator. The aim of these conversations is for the impact of the harm to be understood by those responsible, for them to acknowledge the impact and for them to identify and take steps to put it right.
- A Circle of Friends intervention may be set up to help foster and encourage alternative friendships.
- Regular check-ins for the child with a school adult may be put in place so the child can speak about how they are, be support to build their self esteem, and share any future concerns so these can be quickly addressed.
- Children may be in need of support from external agencies e.g. behaviour support team, educational psychologist or support at home from local authority and children's services. Following discussions involving the parents, SENDCo and class teacher, appropriate referrals can be made.
- Parents of children who have been bullied will also be offered support if needed.

Strategies and consequences for the person who is bullying

At Goose Green we will not humiliate any child for acting or behaving in the wrong way. Discussions will be carried out privately and with those necessary. A variety of strategies and consequences will be used at the discretion of the leadership team and in discussion with the child's parents/carers/teachers. These will be tailored to the individual person and situations, as we know that different children will need different support.

At Goose Green Primary School, we know that children's developmental stage can contribute to poor behaviour choices. Children may still be developing an understanding of empathy, body language and boundaries. This is held in mind when working with the children involved.

We appreciate that bullying is a sensitive and upsetting issue for all involved. We believe everyone involved in the situation needs to be supported, including the child who has been displaying bullying behaviours. It is our aim for that child to understand their internal motivations, why it is unacceptable to treat others like this and what they can do in the future to help prevent bullying behaviour.

Strategies used to work with the person displaying the bullying behaviour:

- Where appropriate, restorative conversations led by class teacher or member of Senior Leadership can be held between the victim and the perpetrator. The aim of these conversations is for the impact of the harm to be understood by those responsible, for them to acknowledge the impact and for them to identify and take steps to put it right.
- Consequences will be used at the discretion of the leadership team in discussion with the child's parents/carers and teachers and in line with our Behaviour and Motivation Policy. Linking the consequence to the behaviour can be helpful. For example, if the child has hurt someone in the playground, then limiting the area they can play within or spending time off the playground may be necessary.
- Check in meetings with a member of staff may be used, where staff will focus on building the child's self esteem and help them identify ways to regulate and improve their behaviour (eg using Zones of Regulation).
- Skills development can be supported as sometimes children act out due to frustration. This can be due to a lack of coping skills or the inability to complete specific tasks. Identifying areas to work on can reduce the risk of repeat behaviours.
- A Circle of Friends intervention may be introduced. This is to encourage alternative and positive friendships with adult support to model targeted behaviour (e.g. sharing, kind words).
- Children who perpetrate frequent acts of bullying may be in need of support from external agencies, e.g. behaviour support team, educational psychologist or support at home from local authority and children's services. Following discussions involving the parents, SENDCo and class teacher appropriate referrals can be made.

Involving Parents/Carers

During communications with parents/carers about incidents of bullying, staff will:

- Remain calm, keeping an open mind about the situation.
- Recognise that a parent may be angry or upset and, if necessary, ask another member of staff to be present for the meeting.
- Explain the school Anti-Bullying Policy and clarify procedures that will be followed and agree future action.
- Invite parents into school to discuss their child's behaviour with a member of the Leadership Team.
- Check in with the family to review the impact of strategies that have been put in place to support the child and to check in with their wellbeing.
- Help support parents introducing them to our Family Liaison Officer or through referral to programmes with Southwark Family Early Help.

Role of the Local Committee

Any significant incidences of bullying or prejudice covered within this policy will be reported and monitored by the local committee.