

# Moat Farm Infant School

## Anti-Bullying Policy



**Last reviewed on:** November 2023

**Next review due by:** November 2024

**Approved by:** Hannah Massey

## **Introduction**

Moat Farm Infant School believes every child has an entitlement to a safe and secure environment in which they feel protected, and so we do not condone any type of bullying or threatening behaviour.

We are aware that pupils may be bullied in any school or setting, and recognise that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to any cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, it is essential that our school:

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their Local Authority's safeguarding team.

This policy is closely linked with our Behaviour Policy, our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, our School Code of Conduct and the School's Vision, Aims and Values

## **Principles**

It is the responsibility of the governing body and the Headteacher to ensure that all members of the school community work within a safe and enabling environment. We value pupils developing 'respect for others resulting from active listening, trust and honesty' (Vision, Aims and Values).

The four guiding principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpin our Anti-Bullying Policy from the moment a pupil enters our school, and throughout their time at Moat Farm Infant School. They are:

- every pupil is a unique pupil, who is constantly learning and can be resilient,
- capable, confident and self-assured;
- pupils learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- pupils learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences
- respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- pupils develop and learn in different ways and at different rates including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

## **Aims**

We are determined to promote and develop a school ethos where bullying behaviour is regarded as unacceptable, to ensure a safe and secure environment is sustained for all pupils.

We aim for all pupils to reach their potential academically, socially and personally through learning and playing in a safe and secure environment.

## **What is Bullying?**

*The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.*

<http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/about-us.aspx>

**BUT** it is not bullying when two children of similar age and strength have the occasional disagreement.

It can include:

- Being hit, punched, kicked or threatened
- Being called names
- Teasing
- Spreading tales or rumours
- Racial abuse

## **Behaviour often associated with bullying:**

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

We will challenge and respond to any concerns related to the above. For more information, see our Behaviour Policy.

Each year we will follow the national anti bullying theme for a week. The children will discuss what bullying is and design a poster around the theme.

## **Types of Bullying:**

### **Cyber-Bullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual bullying', which can occur in and outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen beyond the school day into home and private space, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content.

### **Racist Bullying**

This refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes the person feel unwelcome, marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity culture, faith community, national origin or national status.

### **Homophobic Bullying**

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual people.

### **Vulnerable Groups**

We recognise that some groups of pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- Looked After Children
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Children from ethnic minorities
- Children entitled to Free School Meals
- Children for whom English is an Additional Language
- Children who are perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident.

Other vulnerable groups include

- young carers
- looked after children
- bullying related to home circumstances
- bullying related to appearance or health

There is no hierarchy of bullying - all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

### **Prejudice Related Language**

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are perceived to be different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers are perceived to be different. Dismissing such language as banter is not helpful as it is being used to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

### **Bullying Prevention**

Preventing and raising awareness of bullying is essential in keeping incidents in our school to a minimum. Through assemblies, as well as PSHE lessons, pupils are given regular opportunities to discuss what bullying is, as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, such as two friends falling out, or a one-off argument. An annual 'Anti-bullying Week' is held to further raise awareness. E-safety is an important part of the Curriculum and information for parents is included in newsletters and on the School's website. Pupils are taught to tell an adult in school if they are concerned that someone is being bullied.

Children are also reminded that they must report any incident of bullying to the nearest member of staff or to an adult that they feel particularly comfortable speaking to. This will be investigated and recorded on 'My Concern'. Parents are also urged to report incidents.

### **Signs of Bullying**

Staff should be vigilant in looking out for signs of bullying or other child protection issues including:

**Physical:** unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes, or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches, bedwetting.

**Emotional:** losing interest in school, being withdrawn or secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why unhappy, high level of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, lack of confidence, headaches and stomach aches, signs of depression.

**Behavioural:** asking to be taken to school, coming home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asking for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties, truancy

### **The role of governors**

This policy makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very

seriously and dealt with appropriately. The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and requires the Head teacher to keep accurate records of all incidents.

### **The role of the Head teacher**

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) is aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Head teacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Head teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Head teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. Every term there are assemblies to highlight the schools behaviour Code of Conduct.

### **The role of staff members**

- Whenever incidents of bullying are brought to the attention of staff, the matter will always be taken seriously and will be reported to a senior member of staff. The incident will be recorded on 'My Concern'. The child's class teacher and the Head teacher must be informed immediately.
- Records should indicate the incident, date, time and name of staff member completing log. The information contained in these reports may help to establish any patterns. The logs will also refer to any sanctions that is to be imposed and must report whether parents or carers are to be informed.
- Following the recording of any incident the victim should be assured that the matter will be taken seriously and that it will be investigated.

### **The role of parents**

- Parents should look for signs and systems of bullying, and should listen sympathetically and take seriously, children distressed by bullying. They should listen, support and offer advice to their children. Parents of children who bully should be equally sensitive to the child's problems; many bullies are bullied themselves
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

### **The role of Pupils**

- Bullied pupils should always tell and trust staff to take appropriate action.
- All pupils, should tell staff of any pupil who is suffering from bullying, even if they do not name the bully responsible.

### **Guidance and help**

This may involve counseling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavor to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the Head teacher and the special needs coordinator.

We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Head teacher may contact external support agencies such as the social services. At all times the school's behaviour and sanctions policy will be followed.

### **Equal Opportunities**

There should be equality of opportunity for all children to feel safe secure and protected irrespective of gender, special educational needs and cultural background within the school and this should allow them to learn and achieve.

### **Monitoring and review**

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's anti-bullying logbook, and by discussion with the Head teacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.