

# GREENHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

**Ratified:** March 2010  
**Review:** May 2015

### **Mission Statement**

We will work towards creating a school that values each individual part, be willing to work together in creating a happy, purposeful and caring community that promotes belonging and learning

## **Introduction**

This document is a statement of the strategies used in our school to tackle bullying behaviour. Consultation with Parents', Teachers, Governors and children has helped to formulate this policy. It clearly supports the school mission and reflects the observations and guidance contained in the Elton Committee of Enquiry into Pupil Behaviour (1989) and the LEA Behaviour Policy as detailed in the LEA Behaviour Support Plan 2005-2008. In addition it complies with the following legislation: Children's Act(2004), Education and Inspections Act(2006), Race Relations Act(1976) and The Disability Discrimination Act(1993)

Bullying is a complex issue with a range of possible causes. The school recognises that it is important to have systems in place to

- promote the early identification of children who display bullying behaviours
- assess the needs of children who bully
- identify appropriate support to help them learn new, more appropriate behaviours
- provide support for the victims of bullying
- encourage parents to work in partnership with the school in addressing the issue of bullying.

## **Bullies**

Many bullying behaviours result from low self-esteem, poorly developed social skills and a lack of understanding, or empathy, for the situation of others.

If carried out by adults, these bullying behaviours would lead to criminal prosecutions. People who rely upon aggression in order to express their needs or views are likely to experience difficulties

- in their employment
- in their relationships
- in the community.

## **Victims**

Victims can be physically and psychologically hurt by their experiences of being bullied. They may suffer from low self-esteem, anxiety and depression. The experience of being bullied can therefore have a significant impact, and limiting effect, on the rest of a child's life.

Clearly, one of the key issues is self-esteem, that is

- the influence of low self-esteem on the bully's behaviour
- the influence of low self-esteem on the victim's behaviour
- the impact of bullying on the victim's self-esteem.

## Pupils' Rights

Every pupil has the right

- not to be bullied
- to take pride in being an individual who is different from everyone else
- to live in a happy and secure environment
- to tell an adult if someone or something is making them unhappy
- to say 'no' and mean it when an action, word or deed causes distress
- to walk away from confrontation
- to belong and be equal to all other children in school.

## What is Bullying?

A clear, general definition of bullying is very difficult. Only those who have been bullied can be fully clear as to what it is to be bullied. However it is important that everyone in a school agrees and understands the same definition.

Some suggested descriptions of bullying behaviour to consider when agreeing a definition:

Bullying behaviour

- can be a one-off activity
- can be generally persistent
- is deliberately hostile
- can be violent
- causes distress to one or more persons
- involves an imbalance of power

It includes

- verbal and non-verbal threats of violence
- name calling
- teasing
- ignoring and shunning
- incitement by others to commit an act of bullying
- sexually offensive remarks or behaviour
- racially offensive remarks or behaviour
- interfering with property
- fighting
- demanding money, property or favours with menace
- vandalism
- intimidating or embarrassing graffiti
- damaging another's efforts or possessions
- borrowing equipment without permission
- invading someone else's privacy

## Signs of Bullying

A person may indicate that he/she is being bullied in a variety of ways but will be most encouraged to report bullying if there is an active anti-bullying policy. Parents need to know what to look for too and they should be aware of the following behaviours which may indicate that there is a problem.

### Some possible signs (there may be more)

- unwillingness to go to school
- fear of travelling to and from school
- requests to be taken to and/or collected from school
- changing route to school
- school work deteriorates
- damaged property brought home eg books, clothes
- withdrawn behaviour
- stammering starts
- eating stops
- suicide attempts threatened
- crying at night
- bed wetting
- having nightmares, calling out phrases during sleep eg "Leave me alone".
- unexplained minor injuries
- lost possessions
- stealing money
- refusing to see that there is a problem or what is the problem
- giving unlikely and unreasonable excuses for any of the above.

## Why is Bullying often Successfully Hidden from Teachers?

Bullying generally takes place when adults are unlikely to witness the incidents e.g. unsupervised times or poorly supervised areas of the school or community. Teachers are therefore dependent upon **children or parents** informing them of any incidents of bullying.

Frequently teachers will not find out about all incidents of bullying because of children's

- fear of becoming a victim if, as a witness, you 'whistle blow'
- fear of the bullying becoming worse if, as a victim, you report the bully
- fear, or knowledge, of teachers not taking your concerns seriously.

## **School's Response to Bullying**

We will not accept behaviour from anyone, whether adult or child, that aims to cause pain and distress to others.

The school uses the curriculum and assemblies and their delivery to identify and promote ways to help children to:

- speak out when they are bullied or when they witness bullying
- understand better what is meant by bullying and to consider its causes and effects
- develop social skills eg to become assertive rather than to resort to aggressive or submissive behaviours.

In response to bullying incidents the school will:

- listen and provide immediate support for victim and bully
- investigate incidents as soon as possible
- ensure that clear record-keeping and reporting procedures are complied with by staff following an incident of bullying
- deal effectively and sensitively with bullying incidents
- ensure that all members of the school community avoid the use of behaviours which may be perceived as bullying
- work effectively in partnership with children and parents or carers in dealing with bullying.

## **Dealing with a Bullying Incident**

The aim is to stop the bullying happening again by encouraging both the victim and bully to

- think about their behaviour and the causes and effects of the bullying
- find the solutions to the problems themselves.

And involving teachers and parents in providing appropriate support.

## **Talking to children about incidents of bullying**

The school will help the bully and victim to gain insight into the situation and to consider ways of avoiding or resolving the difficulties they are experiencing and/or presenting.

The behaviour patterns of victims and bullies have often been established as a consequence of the values and experiences they bring to school, so schools need to offer support which is informed by the individual children's needs.

The school will use the Bullying Incident Report Form to

- ensure that all incidents of bullying are addressed effectively through clear and consistently applied procedures
- provide evidence of the actions taken by the school to address incidents of bullying
- monitor, review and evaluate both the progress of individual children and the school's anti-bullying policy.

## Cyberbullying

### Definition

Cyberbullying can be defined as the deliberate use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet to upset someone else. It is worth noting at this point that children are not allowed to bring mobile phones into school and that internet usage is closely monitored by image blocking software, encrypted data transfers and local authority e-safety monitoring. The school also has a acceptable internet user policy which staff and pupils must adhere to.

Cyberbullying is a sub-set or 'method' of bullying. It can be used to carry out all the different 'types' of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to Special Educational Needs), but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying in person, they use technology as a means of conducting the bullying. Cyberbullying can include a wide range of unacceptable behaviours, including harassment, threats and insults, and like face-to-face bullying, cyberbullying is designed to cause distress and harm.

### How cyberbullying differs from other forms of bullying

Cyberbullying does differ in several significant ways to other kinds of bullying, e.g. the invasion of home/personal space, the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, and even in the profile of the bully and target. These differences are important ones for staff, pupils and families to understand.

In cyberbullying, the audience for the bullying can be very large and reached rapidly. A single incident can be experienced as multiple attacks. For example, a humiliating video posted to the web can be copied to many different sites. A single instance of bullying, e.g. the creation of a nasty website or the forwarding of a personal email, can have repeated and long-term consequences, as content that is taken off the internet can reappear or be circulated again. It is also worth noting that some of those being bullied may not be aware that they have been or are being cyberbullied. For example, they may not have seen, or be aware of, content about them that has been posted online.

Bystanders to cyberbullying can easily become perpetrators, e.g. by passing on or showing to others an image designed to humiliate another child or staff member, or by recording an assault/act of bullying on a mobile phone and circulating this.

Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that might previously have been regarded as safe or personal. The person being cyberbullied can be left feeling that there is no place to hide and that they might be attacked at anytime. Sending abusive text messages, for example, means that cyberbullying can take place any time of the day or night, and the target of the cyberbullying can be reached in their own home, even their own bedroom.

People who cyberbully may attempt to remain anonymous and this can be extremely disturbing for those that are being bullied. Although the person being bullied may know that their bully is from within their circle of friends or pupils at their school, they may not know the actual identity of the bully, and this can make them uneasy, distrustful and suspicious of all their relationships.

However, perpetrators are not as anonymous as they might think and there are ways of identifying cyberbullies. Having said that, although there is likely to be an evidence trail ('digital footprints') left by the bully, finding out further information that might help identify who is responsible, by tracking down the person's email or IP address (their unique computer address), is time-consuming and usually requires the involvement of other agencies (e.g. the police and the service provider). In some cases, finding out this information will not clearly identify an individual.

Unlike other forms of bullying, many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence, e.g. in the form of text messages or computer 'screen grabs'. As well as evidence that an incident has taken place, they may also provide information about who the perpetrator is. A nasty text message, for example, will contain the message, the date and time that it was sent, and information about the phone it was sent from.

#### Forms that Cyberbullying can take

- Threats and intimidation
- Harassment or stalking
- Vilification/defamation
- Ostracising/peer-rejection/exclusion
- Identity-theft, unauthorised access and impersonation
- Publicly posting, sending or forwarding personal or private information or images
- Manipulation

#### Support for the person being bullied

All incidents of Cyberbullying should be dealt with by following school procedures for dealing with bullying incidents (see section below).

As with other forms of bullying the target of cyberbullying may be in need of emotional support. Key principles here include reassuring them that they have done the right thing by telling someone, recognising that it must have been difficult for them to deal with, and reiterating that no-one has a right to do that to them.

The school where appropriate will support the victim by:

- Providing advice on online empowerment and safe internet usage
- Try to contain the incident in terms of ensuring that Cyberbullying content is not further distributed
- Contact host and service providers and advise them to remove offensive content

#### Key actions in response to a Bullying Incident

The following Key Actions will be taken by the school in response to any bullying incident

##### 1. Complete the Bullying Incident Report Form

The School will complete this as soon as the incident is reported

##### 2. Discuss the incident with the children individually

The school will support the victim by

- ensuring that the child feels that they are being listened to
- assuring the child that all incidents of bullying are taken seriously
- reassuring the child by explaining how they will be supported and how the incident will be dealt with.

In addition, the victim should, ideally, be supported by the member of staff who they have confided in. As the disclosure will usually have occurred as a result of the child identifying someone who cares or can help them, staff should respond to this trust and confidence.

The school will ensure the bully is dealt with fairly by

- describing the reasons for meeting with them (at the same time, protecting the victim and the identity of any witnesses)
- remaining calm and non-judgemental in order to ensure that the child feels they are being listened to
- assuring the child that all acts of bullying will not be tolerated
- explaining how they will be supported and how the incident will be dealt with.

The school will attempt to help both the bully and the victim to:

- explore the causes and effects of the incident
- identify how the situation could have been avoided or resolved (e.g. how to be assertive rather than aggressive or submissive)
- how they can resolve the present difficulties.
- see the situation from another perspective

### 3. See both the children together for a mediation session

At this meeting the designated representative of the school will do the following:

- Remain calm and non-judgemental when the children talk through their understanding of the problem
- Listening more than speaking. Not assume that they know how the children feel or anticipate what they want to say. Children are more likely to reflect on their behaviour if they feel they are being listened to rather than spoken at.
- Paraphrase what they are told to show that they understand what the children have said and to check with the child if this is correct. It is how the children perceive the situation which is important, not how we perceive it.
- Encourage the children, through questions, to reflect on their behaviour and the factors which may have influenced the behaviour of others. When appropriate, encourage empathy.
- Explain that the Bullying Incident Report Form will record
  - the details of the incident
  - the future conduct of the children, as identified and agreed by all parties in the meeting
  - the actions which each child should take if there is further bullying or provocation (eg to report it to their teacher immediately)
  - the monitoring arrangements for ensuring that the problems don't happen again
  - the further action the school will take if the problems do happen again
  - the date when these arrangements will be reviewed (usually within one week).

The school will decide at this stage any appropriate responses and measures that need to take place. If appropriate, parents will be involved at this stage.

The School will not collude with the secrecy which surrounds bullying. We will make sure that everyone directly concerned with the child's welfare is made aware of what has happened and how it is to be addressed.

#### 4. Follow up session

The school will inform the parents or carers of the incident as soon as possible after the incident, the actions taken and the review arrangements. Where appropriate the school will arrange to meet the parents or carers to discuss the ways the school wants to support their child and to discuss how they can help as well. The school will explain the anti-bullying policy and the rationale behind it.

When asking parents or carers to a meeting school will make sure that they are well prepared with

- records of the concerns
- evidence of the action the school has taken to support their child
- constructive options to try to solve the problems.

#### 5. Review the arrangements

The school will arrange a review meeting.

If there have been no further incidents

- file a copy of the Bullying Incident Report Form in the School Behaviour Report Log, and copies will be placed in the files of both the bully and the victim

If there is evidence of further bullying (or unwarranted accusations of bullying the school will arrange to meet with the relevant child's parents or carers to

- seek agreement on the needs and behaviours to be addressed and identify any further assessment and/or specialist support that might be required
- plan the nature and level of the support the school will provide
- identify how they might help you to meet the child's needs
- identify appropriate sanctions if the behaviours are repeated.

At this stage the assessment, support, monitoring and review arrangements should be recorded on an Individual Education Plan or a Pastoral Support Programme.

#### **Child Protection**

The safety and welfare of the child over-rides all other consideration. Where a bullying incident has occurred and it has been judged to put the child at risk, the school will follow the LEA child protection procedures.

## **Supporting Documentation**

Copies of the following documents can be found in the Headteacher's Office along with a range of anti-bullying resources.

Code of Behaviour  
Primary Behaviour File  
LEA Behaviour File  
Care & Control  
SEN

## **Organisations that can offer support**

A list of Organisations that can offer support for parents, pupils and staff can be found at:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/safetolearn/organisations/>