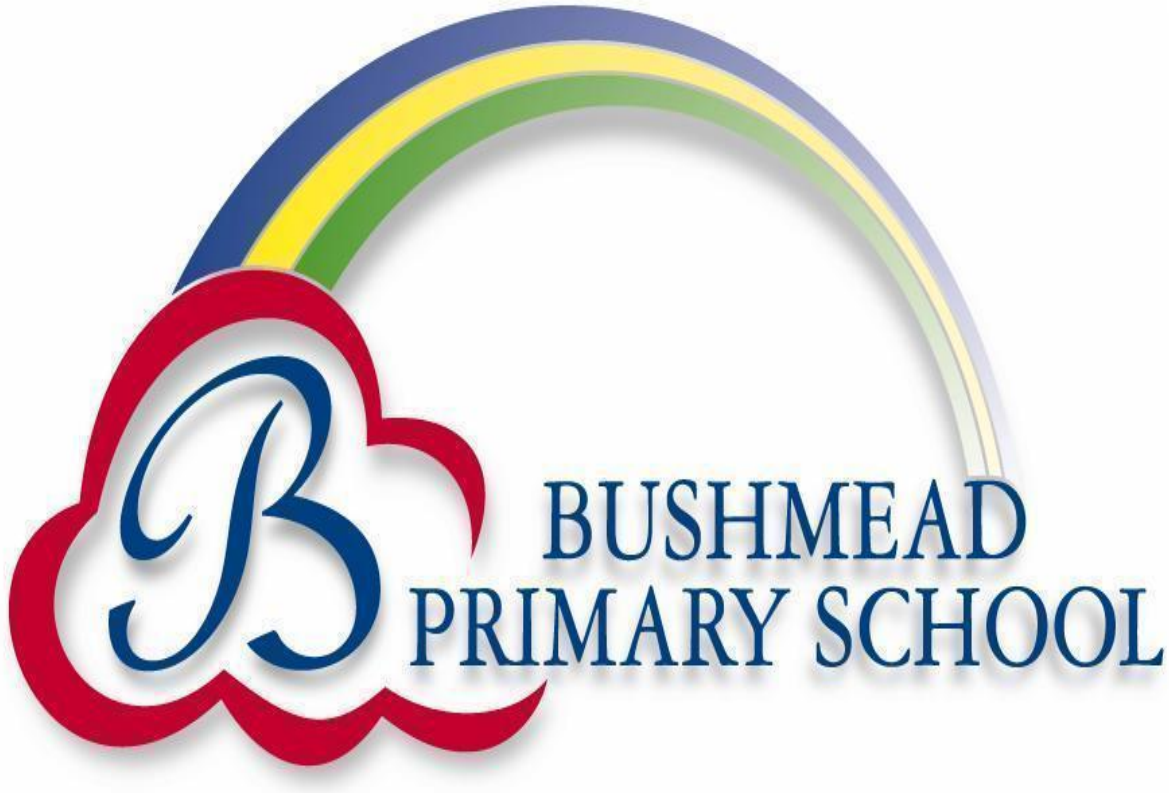
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Owned and Written by	**Kieron Leech**	**Date** **Reviewed February 2021**
Approved by	**Full Governors**	**Date** **15 March 2021**
Date for Review	**Spring Term 2023**	
This policy has been updated to reflect the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018, and it supersedes the HM Government Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners and Managers published in March 2015.		

Rationale & Purpose

At Bushmead Primary School, we take bullying and the impact that it has very seriously. We endeavour to respond to known incidents as quickly and effectively as possible. Bullying is not tolerated in any form and all staff have high expectations of the behaviour of all pupils within the school. Behaviour that falls below the expected standard is challenged and dealt with immediately.

Aims

- To produce a safe and secure environment for all pupils, where all can achieve their best without anxiety
- To promote and focus on positive relationships between pupils, rather than negative experiences
- To deal with concerns regarding bullying quickly and sensitively
- To use an approach which suits the needs of the pupil(s) involved and the situation

Objectives

- To produce a consistent and effective way to respond to any bullying incidents that may occur and match these to the needs of the child and situation
- To use anti-bullying theme weeks to promote positive friendships and relationships between pupils as well as making sure that children know which adults they can speak to when they have any concerns
- To ensure staff follow an appropriate approach to dealing with bullying and make each person's responsibility clear including the victim and the aggressor

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as:

Repeated, unacceptable action taken by one or more individuals with the deliberate intention of hurting another over a period of time, either physically or emotionally.

(DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)

Bullying may take a variety of forms such as:

- Physical – hitting, kicking and taking of someone's belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting comments, offensive remarks
- Indirect – spreading malicious gossip or rumours, peer group exclusion
- Cyber bullying – via Internet on chat rooms or via e-mails, text messaging, gaming sites and apps
- Homophobic bullying - such as using the word 'gay' as a derogatory term
- Prejudicial bullying – eg. By gender; race; religion; culture; SEN or disability; appearance; personal circumstances; sexual orientation.

Procedures

Curricular Approaches to Bullying

Each year group has specific lessons or units of work that address bullying, positive friendships or how to deal with negative experiences. These are in addition to the work completed during anti-bullying week. Many of the key themes taught in the curriculum can be found in PSHE, Computing and RE, with many year groups using 'Circle Time' to address topics around bullying and friendships. At Bushmead, the curriculum is used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying, consequences and what can be done if you are experiencing bullying at school
- Increase understanding of empathy and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- Teach pupils how to constructively manage their relationships with others and to understand how to develop positive relationships with peers
- Highlight the effect that bullying has on people and the consequences that bullying brings for those who bully

To do this, we focus on topics such as:

- Types of bullying, what constitutes as bullying and the consequences that it may have
- How to resist bullying and who to talk to when people do things that we do not like
- How people's bodies and feelings can be hurt
- Recognising unhealthy relationships and how to resolve disputes
- Online safety

The school's Values system also provides pupils with the key characteristics that help to foster strong and positive relationships between pupils and help them to cope with a range of situations. We believe that these values are integral to our pupil's development and are key to ensuring pupil to pupil relationships are positive.

Our Key Strategies to Tackle Bullying

All known and reported incidences of bullying will be fully investigated by the class teacher or a senior leader. Before embarking upon an appropriate approach to resolving the bullying incident, we must ensure that the incident described by the victim is bullying. If it is not, then the issue will be dealt with referring to our 'Positive Management of Behaviour Policy'.

To ensure that incidents of bullying are dealt with as effectively as possible, we must consider the children involved. This may require us to use different approaches in different situations and therefore we will carefully select one of six major approaches to dealing with bullying. Details of each approach can be found below.

1. Disciplinary Approach

- Explain to the child accused of bullying, that we know what has been happening, that it constitutes bullying and that it will not be tolerated at this school

- Ask the student what they have to say about it

- Refer to the school rules which refer to such behaviour and explain that pupils who engage in bullying others will face consequences

- State nature of sanction to be applied

- Stress the next steps if bullying continues

2. Strengthening the Victim

This approach aims to provide an effective way for the victim to stand up to verbal bullying. The victim of the bullying will meet with a designated adult in school to discuss details of where, when and how the bullying takes place. In these sessions, the victim and member of staff will look at ways that they can respond to the bullying. This may take the form of agreement or responding to the bully with a question in return. This technique is designed to put the bully on 'the back foot' and divert them from their verbal attack.

3. Mediation

Mediation can take place when the 'bully' and 'victim' agree to seek help from a mediator (usually a member of the school's behaviour team) to resolve the issue.

The procedure for mediation is as follows:

- Each of the pupils asked to explain the situation from their point of view in turn

- There should be no interruptions from the pupil who is listening but they are to summarise what was said by the other pupil at the end

- Both pupils will then be asked how they feel the situation can be resolved and the mediator will note down the suggestions

- Each suggestion is listed, examined and discussed to see which is best to resolve the conflict

4. Restorative Practices

Restorative practices are used to repair damaged relationships between individual pupils or groups. With this approach, the 'offender' must acknowledge wrongdoing and any hurt caused by their actions. They will then act restoratively (eg. An apology and compensatory actions). The Restorative Practice approach will be delivered during a meeting between the 'bully' and the 'victim' with a set script being used to ensure the bullying behaviour is addressed. (See Appendix 1 for example script.) The first step of this approach centres around questioning the 'bully' about his/her actions. Next, attention switches to the 'victim', discussing how the bullying has made them feel and the impact that it has had. Follow up meetings are then conducted and the situation between the 'bully' and the 'victim' are monitored closely.

5. Support Group Approach

The Support Group Approach has 7 steps which should be followed to reach a positive conclusion.

Step 1 – Talk to the victim. A member of staff meets with the victim to discuss the impact that the bullying has had on them. In this meeting, the member of staff will not ask for specific details of incidents but will focus in on the distress that has been experienced by the victim. This may be verbal, written or in pictorial form, depending on how the pupil feels most comfortable in sharing this information. The victim will be asked to identify the bully/bullies and to suggest names of other pupils to form a group who could help solve the problem.

Step 2 – Convening a group meeting. This will include those identified as the bullies and the pupils selected by the victim. The victim is not required to be present. Group size is normally between 6 and 8 pupils.

Step 3 – Explaining the problem. Member of staff outlines the situation and focuses in on the distress that the victim is experiencing. No specific incidents are referred to and no accusations are made.

Step 4 – Promoting shared responsibility. It is made clear to all involved that the purpose of the group is to help solve the problem and that everyone has the responsibility to improve the situation.

Step 5 – Ideas. Member of staff asks the group for their ideas on how things could be made better for the victim. Each person is then asked to give at least one thing they can do to help.

Step 6 – Leaving it up to the individuals in the group. Having explained the situation, the member of staff empowers the group to take responsibility of the situation. They are all thanked for their support and informed that further individual meetings will be held to check on progress.

Step 7 – Final meetings. At least a week should be given (possibly longer) before the final meetings to ascertain progress. Each group member feeds back. The victim also meets with the member of staff at this stage as part of the monitoring process.

6. Method of Shared Concern

This particular approach also has a number of steps to it to reach the desired outcome.

Step 1 – From evidence received, identify and meet with each of the bullies one by one. The member of staff conducting the meeting will start by explaining who they are and why they have asked the 'bully' to talk with them. The adult will then share their concern about pupil X but no accusations will be made. The pupil will then be asked if they have noticed anything about pupil X. As soon as there is recognition that pupil X appears to be distressed, the 'bully' will be asked: *'What can we do about it?'* Suggestions will be listened to and then the member of staff will explain that they will be talking to others about how the situation can improved as well. A further meeting will then be arranged to see how things have progressed.

Step 2 – Interview with the 'target'. The pupil will then have what is happening explained to them and the situation will be discussed in more detail, listening to the 'target'.

Step 3 – Member of staff to meet with suspected bullies again individually to ascertain progress. If adequate progress has been made, a meeting will then be arranged with all of the suspected bullies.

Step 4 – During the meeting alluded to above, a plan to resolve the conflict will be agreed in cooperation with the target.

Step 5 – At a final meeting, the target will be present with all suspected bullies and negotiating an acceptable solution will take place.

If pupils do not respond to the approaches above and bullying continues, then further action is taken to deal with persistent or violent bullying. Such incidents should be referred to a member of the senior leadership team. Further action may include:

- **Withdrawal of Golden Time, playtime and lunch-time privileges, at the end of which a reintegration programme may need to be established**
- **Withholding participation in any school visit or sports event that is not an essential part of the curriculum**
- **Involvement of outside agencies to assist the situation**

- **Fixed term exclusion**

Reducing the Threat of Cyber Bullying

- To reduce the threat of cyber bullying, we at Bushmead strongly believe that children should have monitored access to mobile phones and use of internet. Children should **not** bring mobile phones into school. Access to sites such as Facebook, Instagram, gaming chat rooms and other such sites are strictly prohibited in school and we strongly advise parents to check age restrictions before allowing children to sign-up to such sites.
- In school, we value the delivery of themed weeks and days such as 'Safer Internet Day' and the Computing curriculum has a strong emphasis on staying safe on-line and which sites we should trust.
- Outside of school, we advise parents to ensure games children access through the internet are monitored extremely carefully to reduce the risk of online bullying or abuse.

The Role of Parents

Parents who are concerned that their child may be a victim or a perpetrator of bullying should contact their child's class teacher by contacting the school office to arrange an appointment, explaining the urgency and seriousness of the situation. The issue can then be discussed in a detailed and sensitive manner. From this, appropriate action can then be taken.

If necessary, the school's Family Workers can also be contacted for advice.

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 community.

Appendix 1 – Restorative Practice

Example script

1. In the presence of the victim, 'the bully' is asked the following questions:

What happened?
What were you thinking at the time?
What have you thought about since?
Who has been affected by what you have done?
In what way?

2. The practitioner now switches to the victim:

What did you think when you realised what had happened?
What have you thought about since?
What impact has this incident had on you and others?
What has been the hardest thing for you?
What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

3. Next, it is back to the bully:

What do you think you need to do to make things right?
How can we make sure this doesn't happen again?