

The Dharma Primary School
Anti-Bullying Policy
This is a whole school policy and includes the EYFS

Introduction

Bullying is not acceptable and all members of the school community have a responsibility to do their best to make sure that bullying does not happen. If it does occur it is always taken seriously.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour Policy, the Online Safety Policy, the Parents' Concerns Procedure and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, all of which are available to parents upon request. Copies of all of these documents are also located on the school website.

The Dharma Primary School's overall approach to pastoral care actively encourages good behaviour and positive relationships and seeks to minimise the likelihood of bullying. In all our endeavours we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and happiness of all children in our school. We aim to support and nourish our children in their formative years. As a school we wish to foster an environment in which individuals can flourish and be cherished. We are committed to every child and our Buddhist ethos is positive and inclusive. It is acceptance rather than tolerance that underpins the school and all pupils are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate diversity. As such any bullying activity is contrary to our founding principles. We reject all forms of bullying and will act swiftly and decisively when such cases emerge.

This policy has been drawn up with assistance from guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)*, and *Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges (May 2018)*, and will be reviewed against any new government guidance issued. This policy will also apply to bullying behaviour outside of the School of which the School becomes aware.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to prevent bullying occurring at school in so far as is reasonably practicable. Our aim is to create a School in which pupils grow up happily, free to pursue their own interests but with consideration for others, and free from fear. Every child has a right to feel safe and secure in school.

We hope to prevent bullying before it occurs through the continuing vigilance of all pupils and staff, by educating pupils in the importance of caring for and respecting each other and by agreeing a definition of bullying, so that all pupils and staff have a clear understanding of what we, as a School, consider unacceptable behaviour. All staff are mindful of their duty of care and the importance of reducing the risks of bullying at times and places where it is most likely.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power, (Anti-bullying Alliance). It deliberately causes pain, unhappiness, humiliation or suffering to another and is unprovoked. It can take many forms and may be both inside and/or outside school. It can be physical, such as hitting, kicking or taking another person's belongings. It can be verbal, such as name-calling, insults, threats, repeated teasing or any other type of intimidation. It can be indirect, such as spreading rumours or excluding someone from a group. It can be cyber-bullying, via text messages, social media and gaming, including the use of images or videos.

In addition to these broad guidelines, bullying includes discriminatory activity of any kind based on race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or due to a person's home circumstances, health or appearance. It can be because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It can be because of an actual or perceived difference.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language ('banter' or 'horseplay') can have a significant impact on a victim of bullying. Early intervention and close attention can help to set expectations of acceptable (and unacceptable) behaviour and stop negative behaviours escalating.

There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour but parents and teachers should consider bullying as a possibility and look into it further.

Safeguarding

Bullying behaviour may be of such a nature that safeguarding concerns are raised. See the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for the School's approach to peer-on-peer abuse. See also Appendix 14 of that policy for the school's approach to Peer-on-Peer Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment. Concerns about a pupil's welfare because they are the perpetrator or victim of bullying behaviour must be reported in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and appropriate action taken, taking into account the Local Safeguarding Children Board's threshold document.

Indicators

It may be that a child is being bullied, if he or she:

- is unwilling to go to school
- changes their usual routine
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- has possessions which are damaged or go missing
- starts stealing or asks for money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- intimidates other children or siblings
- stops eating
- gives food away
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Bullying behaviour will never be dismissed as being normal between young people, or simply "part of growing up". Serious examples of such behaviour can cause lasting psychological damage and in extreme circumstances may even lead some victims to contemplate suicide.

OUR STRATEGY

Education and Prevention

Education must be at the heart of any effort to mitigate against and eliminate bullying. The risk of bullying is minimised by many aspects of life within our community.

In educating children about bullying we aim to teach them to:

- recognise when it is occurring
- talk openly and honestly about any incidents
- understand the reasons behind such behaviour
- understand its effects
- learn how to prevent and how to respond to intimidating behaviour
- feel encouraged to report incidents even if they are only witnesses.

We work with these issues in our circle and puja times and in personal, health and social education (PSHE) lessons as well as directly when incidents occur. In line with our Buddhist ethos, we give priority to personal development and the development of social and emotional skills ('SEL') at different points during the day.

Other areas of the curriculum, such as drama and English (studies in literature and children's written work) may also deal with some of the issues which arise in relationships. Children have frequent opportunities to raise issues and discuss all manners of behaviour.

Within our ethos, we frame bullying as behaviour that we aim to change. Ultimately, both 'bully' and 'victim' are 'victims' of power-based behaviour and it is important to bear in mind that unskilful behaviours in school emerge for a huge variety of reasons: e.g. classroom dynamics, peer pressure, misunderstandings, confusion and family backgrounds. As such, both the child bullying and the recipient are suffering and are in need of help and support.

Supervision

Effective pupil supervision throughout the day is one of the most efficient preventative strategies.

Information Sharing

Parents are informed of this policy during community meetings, via email and through interactions with teachers.

Online safety is an important aspect of the curriculum. Parents are informed about online safety issues and the School's strategies to safeguard pupils through correspondence and through community meetings to raise awareness. Pupils themselves receive education in online safety. Please see our online safety policy.

Training

The Headteacher, Clare Eddison is the school's appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). She is assisted by Alison Mayo and Mei Mei Jacklin, (Head and Deputy Head of Early Years respectively) who are the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL's). All DSL's regularly attend training courses run by external agencies and then cascade this material to all staff as appropriate.

All staff new to the school are briefed on issues of pupil welfare via the school's induction programme and staff are made aware of the risks of peer-on-peer abuse and how bullying behaviour may give rise to safeguarding concerns. Staff are aware of the need for ongoing vigilance paying particular attention to break and play times.

Our intention is to raise staff awareness through annual refresher training, for staff to be alert to children who may be vulnerable and at risk from bullying, and to take appropriate action to reduce the risk of bullying. All staff are reminded of the possible indicators of bullying behaviour.

Our response

Immediate Action

If a child is being physically bullied, our immediate response is to intervene to stop the violence and ensure the immediate physical safety of the victim.

Reporting Procedures

If a member of staff is concerned that a child at the school is being bullied then they should report this to the teacher of the child concerned (if not a teacher) in the first instance. Children who become aware of bullying issues should inform any responsible adult.

In all cases, the adult informed or who has witnessed the bullying needs to record the incident in either the Behaviour log (green) or the Safeguarding Log (red), depending on the nature of the incident. Patterns of behaviour can be seen to emerge when all incidents are logged in the correct manner. This strengthens the school's approach to monitoring children's behaviour and enables the school to respond at the appropriate level and with the appropriate actions.

Investigation and Sanctions

When bullying is seen or reported, as soon as possible, we look into the allegations to find out the nature and severity of the incident. However, if the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the matter should be reported in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy *before* further investigation is carried out.

Some types of harassment or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence. If staff judge that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Any child found intimidating another will be told to stop and the supervisor/teacher will follow through by monitoring that child.

If the bullying is low-level then it will be dealt with by the teacher or supervisor present at the incident. At this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident which is not too serious include:

- there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully; or
- the complaint is justified in whole or in part and further action will be needed. The range of consequences vary (see Behaviour Policy) but the safety and happiness of those threatened will be the first consideration.

For more serious incidents, and for multiple incidents, all the consequences listed in the Behaviour Policy are available to the Headteacher, including temporary or, ultimately, permanent exclusion.

In all cases, school staff have a responsibility to support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for their needs. The nature and level of this support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need.

Every attempt will be made to ensure that information about bullying is handled sensitively and that confidentiality is respected wherever possible. However, in all cases, once the nature of the incident has been evaluated, parents of the children involved in the incident will be informed.

Whilst the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and any underlying issues will be considered, it is important to send a message to the perpetrator that bullying behaviour is not acceptable in our school community.

Conflict Resolution

If appropriate, (with particular reference to the 'victim'), the children may be brought together with a teacher (usually the class teacher, SENCo or the Headteacher) in a structured, supportive atmosphere in an attempt to support them to develop the capacity to resolve their own conflict:

- The person mediating asks each child in turn to tell their version of the difficulty. The listening child is requested to remain silent while the other speaks. The aim of the discussion is to reach consensus regarding what happened and in order to ascertain the facts it may be necessary to ask for witnesses to the incident.
- The mediator asks the children what they can do about this difficulty if it reoccurs, encouraging the children to take ownership of their contributions in this phase (i.e. I can/should. We could/should.). The mediator may have further suggestions at this point.
- The mediator supports the children to reach agreement together on how to proceed having heard all the suggestions.
- If necessary, the mediator supports the children to consider what they will do if their agreement is broken, and offers to implement agreed consequences or facilitate again if the agreement is broken.
- The mediator is responsible to report this conflict resolution procedure to the class teacher and a written record is kept as part of the write-up in the Behaviour log under 'Action Taken'.

The most successful outcome of this supportive process would result in a transformation of behaviours from ignorance to understanding. However, we recognise that care, safety and protection from harm is paramount and fundamental to our school ethos and that disciplinary procedures are sometimes necessary to the process of working through 'bullying' issues.

A supportive process aims to help children:

- build confidence and self-esteem,
- understand their own behaviour and the behaviour of others,
- find ways of forming good relationships with others,
- develop assertiveness skills,
- develop empathy for others,
- prevent further or future unskilful behaviour.

If the bullying has had a serious impact on a child's ability to learn, the school will consider whether the child will benefit from being assessed by the SENCo.

The role of parents

We endeavour to foster good relationships with parents and appreciate that their support is essential in maintaining a happy, safe and secure environment for the children in our school. It is important that children see that the key adults in their lives share a common aim. Parents can make a valuable contribution by nurturing positive attitudes to learning and behaviour, as well as supporting in classrooms and on educational visits.

If you feel your child may be the victim of bullying behaviour, please inform the school. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow. We will keep you informed of actions taken. If your child is the perpetrator and the behaviour persists we will ask you to take an active role in supporting the school in changing the behaviour. Please help to reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and please encourage your child to speak to staff and not to be afraid to ask for help.

Further sources of information

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) - <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/advice-about-education-for-parents/tackling-bullying>

Coram Children's Legal Centre – 020 7520 0300

KIDSCAPE - 020 7730 3300 www.kidscape.org.uk

Parentline Plus - 0808 800 2222 <http://www.familylives.org.uk/>

Youth Access - 020 8772 9900 <http://www.youthaccess.org.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/keeping-children-safe/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

APPENDIX 1

Please also reference the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, appendices 13 and 14.

An incident of online bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures in this policy and with reference to the Behaviour Policy.

What is Online-Bullying?

This is bullying that takes place using technology. There are many types of online bullying. Examples are:

- Text messages that are threatening or cause discomfort
- Pictures/videos via mobile phone cameras – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
- Mobile phone calls – silent calls or abusive messages, stealing victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
- E-mails – threatening or bullying e-mails, often sent using pseudonym or someone else's name.
- Chatroom bullying – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are on the web
- Instant messaging – unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real time conversations using MSN or Facebook Chat
- Bullying via websites and gaming sites – use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and social networking such as Facebook.

The school takes online bullying very seriously (please see the Online Safety Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy) and therefore will deal with each situation individually.

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Online bullying leaves no physical scars so it is perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it can cause can be very severe.

We have pupil Acceptable Use guidelines. These make clear that online bullying in any form (such as via social websites, text messages, images or through the use of email) is forbidden and provide guidance for parents and pupils about online bullying and online safety.

Pupils are taught:

- to understand how to use technology safely and know the risks and learn how to use technology positively.
- know what to do if they or someone they know is being bullied online.
- report any problems with online bullying. If they do have a problem they can talk to teachers and their parents so that they can do something about it.

Person Responsible for reviewing/amending this policy	HT/ CME
Date of last review	11/16
Date of this review/ratification by trustees	09/18
Date of next review	09/20