

Statement on Bullying

Dovecote Primary School is committed to providing an environment for children that is safe, welcoming and free from bullying. Bullying of any form is unacceptable in our school, whether the offender or victim is a child or an adult. The victim is never responsible for being the target of bullying. Bullying will not be tolerated or excused under any circumstances, whether by pupils, parents or staff.

This statement must be read in conjunction with the 'Action Against Bullying' leaflet which compliments this statement. This statement also forms part of the schools suite of policies and statements regarding safeguarding, behaviour, and equality. This statement also covers aspects of bullying and unacceptable behaviour through cyber bullying.

Everyone involved in the school has a responsibility for the safeguarding and wellbeing of the pupils and, staff, children, parent/carers and Governors will be made aware of the school's stance towards bullying. The 'Action on Bullying' leaflet is part of the welcome pack and will also be sent home when necessary. This statement is also available on the school website. Such behaviour will not be tolerated or excused under any circumstances.

After consultation with pupils and outside support agencies, the school defines bullying as **the repeated harassment of others through emotional, physical, verbal or psychological abuse**. Examples of such behaviour and forms of bullying are as follows:

Emotional: Being deliberately unkind, shunning or excluding another person from a group or tormenting them. For example, forcing another person to be 'left out' of a game or activity, passing notes about others or making fun of another person, 'hiding' people's possessions.

Physical: Pushing, scratching, spitting, kicking, hitting, biting, taking or damaging belongings, tripping up, punching or using any other sort of violence against another person. This is different to other aggressive behaviour in that it fits the definition of 'repeated harassment'.

Verbal: Name-calling, put-downs, ridiculing or using words to attack, threaten or insult. For example, spreading rumours or making fun of another person's appearance.

Psychological: Behaviour likely to instil a sense of fear or anxiety in another person.

Racist: Racial taunts, insults, graffiti, gestures. This aspect is covered in more detail in the school's racial equality statement.

Sexual: Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.

Homophobic: Because of, or focussing on the issue of a person's sexuality.

Religious/cultural: Based on a person's beliefs or traditions.

Social: Based on a person's appearance or health, related to their home circumstances, a disability or their academic ability.

Cyber: All areas of internet such as email and internet chat room misuse. Threats using text messages. Misuse of associated technology such as digital camera and video. Uploading of images without permission (this is also covered in the school's Guidelines of Photographing Children).

Bullying can be as a result of one of the above, or a mixture of one or more.

Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The Head teacher and the staff will make every effort to create a tolerant and caring environment in the school, where bullying behaviour is not acceptable. Staff will discuss the issues surrounding bullying openly, including why bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and what the consequences

of bullying behaviour will be. SEAL is a core element of the school's curriculum and is embedded in school life. We work hard to promote co-operation and encourage pupils to take responsibility for the school and their behaviour.

The Peer Mediators and Buddies play a vital role in developing and maintaining positive pupil relationships. The mid-day supervisors are often the first point of contact for pupils at lunchtime, and their approach must be consistent and in line with this policy and all school policies. Appropriate training will be given to all staff.

Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Despite all proactive efforts to prevent it, bullying behaviour is likely to occur on occasion and the school recognises this fact and will react appropriately. In the event of such incidents, the following principles will govern the school's response:

- All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively. All adults will be aware of the need for sensitivity when dealing with pupils for whom English is an additional language, those with additional needs and or disabilities.
- Children will be encouraged to report immediately any incident of bullying that they witness, or if they feel they have been a victim. They should report to the nearest member of staff, or peer mediator if relevant, who will decide if the matter needs taking further. They will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously and handled carefully.
- All members of staff, parents and other adults have a duty to report any incidents of bullying they witness involving children or adults at the school. Anyone who sees bullying happen and does nothing is supporting the bully.
- If a child or a member of staff tells someone that they are being bullied, they will be given the time to explain what has happened and reassured that they were right to tell.
- The individual who has been the victim of bullying will be helped and supported by the staff team. An individual will be identified whom the pupil feels comfortable talking to. They will be kept under close supervision and staff will check on their welfare regularly. Parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible kept informed of the situation until all parties are happy the issue has been resolved. If parents/carers do not feel satisfied with the resolution, they will be encouraged to meet with the Headteacher. If this does not resolve the situation, they will be informed of the school complaints procedure (this is available at the school office, and on the school web site).
- In most cases, bullying behaviour can be addressed according to the strategies set out in the Behaviour Management policy. The bully will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour and think through the consequences of their actions. Where appropriate, they will be encouraged to talk through the incident with the other person concerned in order to restore the relationship. The response to the incident will vary depending on the type of bullying. For example raising pupil awareness of certain issues like homophobic or sexist comments may stop the problem whereas premeditated cyber bullying would need a different approach.
- Where bullying behaviour persists, more serious actions may have to be taken, as laid out in the Behaviour for Learning policy. The school will isolate and or exclude pupils for serious or persistent bullying.
- A member of staff will inform the parents/carers of all the children involved in a bullying incident at the earliest possible opportunity. If appropriate, staff will facilitate a meeting between the relevant parents/carers. At all times, staff will handle such incidents with care and sensitivity.
- All confirmed incidents of bullying will be reported to the Head teacher and will be recorded in the Incidents of Bullying Log. In the light of reported incidents, the Head teacher and other relevant staff will review the school's procedures in respect of bullying. Any analysis, or patterns of behaviour will be shared with all staff. This statement will also be reviewed annually in line with the school development plan and relevant elements of the monitoring and evaluation schedule. This review will involve staff, pupils, governors and parents.