

Ashgrove Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

3 September 2008
Version 1:2

Rationale

Ashgrove Primary School will never knowingly tolerate bullying.

A child that is happy and secure is more likely to make progress personally, socially and academically than a child that is anxious. Acceptance, encouragement and support from the school community all help develop self-esteem and contribute to a child's happiness.

A pro-active pastoral care policy and relationships based on trust among parents, teachers and pupils all minimise bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the repeated or continuous aggression of one child or group of children towards another. It can result in embarrassment, insecurity, discomfort or pain and can take many forms, including physical or verbal abuse, gesture, extortion or social exclusion. These may lead to certain changes in a child's behaviour, including an increasingly withdrawn personality, tearfulness, a lack of concentration, the deterioration of schoolwork or absenteeism.

In any group of children there is the potential for bullying. It can occur in a number of different forms and in Ashgrove Primary School we are particularly aware of the risk of:

- physical bullying pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, etc. and threats of violence;
- emotional bullying excluding, tormenting, ridicule and humiliation;
- verbal bullying name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours and persistent teasing;
- discrimination racism, sexual harassment, sectarianism.

Aims

The community of Ashgrove Primary School will work together with the intention that:

- each child will be safe, self-assured and happy, making worthwhile progress personally, socially and academically;
- children will show respect and tolerance towards others by befriending, including and helping each other whenever possible and by actively opposing aggression and bullying;
- disagreements and problems will be addressed calmly, fairly and openly;
- victims will be supported as promptly as possible;
- parents will be informed and their co-operation sought;
- bullies will be encouraged to adopt acceptable behaviour; and
- opportunities for bullying will be minimised.

Promoting an Anti-Bullying Culture

The school will maintain a pro-active approach. Policies have been agreed to help pupils develop self-esteem and respect for others. Children are encouraged to care about each other, to share and to co-operate. They are given opportunities through whole-class circle time and in groups to talk and listen to others.

Staff will:

- adopt positive ways of promoting each child's self-esteem and self-confidence;
- promote positive behaviour by ensuring that there is more praise than criticism;
- provide whole-school projects which encourage co-operation and tolerance, eg participation in plays, discussions, surveys, poster designing, etc;
- promote anti-bullying activities;
- guide children in planning and following class rules;
- never belittle a child in front of his/her peers;
- ensure that children are given opportunities to help adults in school and to take on increasing responsibility;
- structure achievable tasks so that children are likely to succeed; and
- promote practical caring.

Procedure

The school's response to any suspected or reported bullying will include:

1. Building a Picture

We will:

- establish the location, time and date of the incident;
- establish the type of bullying and the sequence of events: and
- identify those involved.

2. Dealing with the Bully

We will:

- react promptly and firmly;
- take action to modify the bully's behaviour;
- apply a sanction that clearly demonstrates that bullying is unacceptable;
- record all incidents of bullying and the measures taken; and
- monitor the progress made by the bully.

3. Applying Sanctions

Graded sanctions will be applied progressively according to the seriousness and persistence of the bullying.

- discussion with the pupils involved - an apology may suffice;
- discussion with the bully's parents;

- withdrawal of privileges such as playtime, jobs, after-school activities; etc;
- exclusion from school at lunchtime;
- temporary suspension; and
- expulsion.

4. Supporting the Victim

Victims must never suffer in silence. They are encouraged to talk to someone they can trust and write down what actually happened.

We will:

- investigate any incident;
- take the problem seriously;
- interview the bully and the victim separately;
- obtain an apology from the bully;
- decide on appropriate action;
- keep a record of the incident, the action taken and interviews;
- contact the bully's parents in all but superficial incidents;
- keep staff aware of proceedings;
- monitor the effectiveness of action taken; and
- hold follow-up meeting with the victim's family to discuss progress.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.