Bernards Heath Infant and Nursery School

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Next Review Date:	June 2025
Committee:	LFL
Reviewed by:	Hannah Rimmer

At Bernards Heath Infant and Nursery School we believe that all children are entitled to an education that enables them to develop a positive sense of self and the skills for lifelong learning. We do this through a curriculum designed to develop the whole child and by providing a caring and secure learning environment.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all stakeholders know how we define bullying behaviour and how we work to stop it having a negative impact on the children in our care. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Therapeutic Thinking Policy.

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally

Bullying behaviour has very specific characteristics:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- excluding
- targeting certain groups because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (email, social networks and instant messenger)

At Bernards Heath Infant and Nursery School, we further define bullying as one child deliberately using their power to make another child feel bad. Bullying is not having a single argument or fight with someone. It isn't saying something bad to someone once when angry, frustrated or annoyed. Bullying goes on deliberately (on purpose) over a period of time.

It is important to make a distinction between the normal developmentally appropriate behaviours of children aged 3-7 years old and behaviour which could justifiably be regarded as bullying. Whilst the school would not wish to encourage rough play some incidents will occur. Children are taught to use the phrase 'Stop I don't like it!' if someone is doing or saying something they don't like. We also teach children to hold up an outstretched hand and keep a straight face to show the person they are talking to they are being serious. On the occasions where rough play results in someone being hurt adults will talk about the school expectations; kind, respectful, safe. There may also be logical, protective and educational consequences applied in line with our Therapeutic Thinking (behaviour) Policy.

The overlap between bullying and teasing is an important one to recognise because playful teasing, while not encouraged, may be relatively insignificant. If the teasing involves persistent intimidation and results in distress, it falls under the definition of bullying.

Implementing consequences that are not logical or protective/educational does not end bullying. Children who are demonstrating bullying behaviour do not change this behaviour because they are made to feel worse about themselves. At Bernards Heath we stress that it is the bullying behaviour, rather than the person doing the bullying, that is not liked. We positively encourage all children to take responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences and to make a commitment to take action to end any bullying and provide support for the bullied child.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy and practice includes a range of strategies adapted to suit particular incidents through a whole school approach, including:

- Sharing our definition of bullying with staff, parents, carers and children
- An environment where children can talk and adults listen
- A helping hand, revisited each year, where children names safe adults they can talk to about anything upsetting them
- A growing up curriculum that explicitly teaches children about healthy relationships (this includes opportunities to discuss bullying and how to respond in assemblies, whole classes and small circle time groups)
- A behaviour policy that is explicit about how pro-social behaviours are encouraged and how consequences are applied for unwanted behaviours
- An open door policy so that parents, carers and staff can talk about their concerns with senior leaders
- Ensuring that incidents are taken seriously, investigated and, if necessary, acted upon
- Systematically recording incidents helping us to review and evaluate our policy and practice (CPOMS is used to record friendship issues and any incidents of racist behaviour)
- Induction for all new staff and raising the importance of taking action against bullying annually for the whole school following the review of this policy
- Mentoring/counselling/group work led by a school adult or an outside agency: Aiming to change the behaviour of children who are vulnerable or bullied and to help them use verbal and body language in a way that discourages bullying, including how to respond to bullying in a calm, controlled manner
- Mentoring/counselling/group work led by a school adult or an outside agency: Aiming to change the behaviour of children exhibiting bullying behaviours to explore their sense of self and understand the feelings and experiences behind the behaviours
- Working with parents and carers (home school triangle) to promote good behaviour, encourage involvement in promoting the school expectations (kind, respectful, safe) and consulting over the school's approach to bullying
- Monitoring the school grounds so that we continue to provide a safe, secure, active and easily supervised environment
- Ensuring that MSAs are equipped to recognise and report concerns about potential bullying behaviours at lunchtime when class staff are not present
- Questionnaires for use with children, parents, carers and staff to monitor how safe they feel/if they have seen/been subject to bullying.

<u>What are possible signs of bullying?</u>

Parents are often the first people who become aware of an unexplained change in the behaviour of their child. This may take the form of a change in sleeping pattern, a lack of interest in food, reluctance to come to school, damage to the child's property, an uncharacteristic quietness, unusually boisterous behaviour or silence. Children who are being bullied may show other changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in their learning or a lack of concentration. Parents should feel able to come and discuss these issues in school so that investigations and strategies can be put into place. Staff are in a strong position to recognise signs of bullying which may relate to changes in behaviour or sudden change in learning standards. This should be addressed immediately; many children may remain silent with their parents but feel able to tell an adult in school. It should also be recognised that children will feel able to approach certain adults within school but not others.

<u>Procedures for dealing with concerns about bullying</u>

There are various levels of approach allowing for the severity of, and any recurrence of, incidents. All such incidents, however minor, should be reported to the Head Teacher and, where necessary, recorded on CPOMS.

Teachers should:

- Listen sympathetically to the child who is subject to bullying behaviours
- Identify if the behaviour could be classified as discrimination towards a protected characteristic (Equality Act 2010)

- Reassure the child and tell them that the problem is not with them but with the bullying behaviour
- Talk to the child who is using bullying behaviour, listen to them, and refer to our school expectations, kind, respectful, safe
- Agree with both parties an action that will be taken and monitor this
- Talk to the parents of both children
- Keep a log of incidents on CPOMS

Support Staff including MSAs should:

- Immediately inform the Class Teacher or member of the leadership team about their concerns

Consequences

It is very important that each incident is addressed at an early stage when strategies may focus on helping both parties deal with social interaction in an acceptable way. Our school practices a therapeutic approach to behaviour management and we use logical protective and educational consequences.

These may include:

- Discussion with the children involved in bullying behaviour
- Discussion with parents and sharing resources they can use to support their child at school, for example, following a racist incident, books that support a child to understand why this is not acceptable behaviour may be shared in school and then sent home for parents to reinforce key messages
- Regular check ins on a 1:1 basis
- Small group and class work led by a school adult or external agency
- Whole school assemblies with a focus on particular skills that need developing or strategies to respond to bullying behaviours
- Spending playtime/lunchtime inside with a school adult to analyse and discuss behaviour and plan how they will behave differently when they return outside (making books/posters)
- Loss of playtime/lunchtime until child shows they can be trusted to play safely outside. Leading to gradual reintroduction of unsupervised playtime.
- Restrictions of movement in the playground – playing in allocated zones
- Withdrawal of child from class to learn with the Head Teacher or Deputy
- Suspension from school
- Permanent exclusion

It would be hoped that for the majority of cases a change can be made to behaviours resulting in a resolution at an early stage before major consequences are needed.

Prevention and support

It is important to recognise that understanding of bullying varies with age and bullying in an infant school would be rare but 'could happen here.'
All children are taught to tell an adult at school about any behaviour that leaves them feeling sad, worried, upset or angry. During the first days/weeks of the autumn term all children are introduced to/reminded of the 'Helping Hand' and encouraged to name and talk about five people they could talk to if they were worried or sad about something. They use their hand and assign one person to each finger and thumb.

Our learning environment, curriculum and school ethos results in children who look after and support each other throughout school:

- Children are encouraged to look after each other and report incidents of behaviours that are not kind, respectful, safe to an adult

- Children are taught that they don't stand by and watch if someone is being unkind to another child
- Children learn to say 'Stop I don't like it'

Our Growing Up at Bernards Heath Curriculum exemplifies how we teach children about safe behaviour, positive relationships and how to report concerns. This is reinforced through our day to day conversations and following incidents as appropriate.

Implementation

Parents can access this policy on the website or in paper form by making a request to the office. All staff have access to a copy of the policy on the X-drive. The policy is explained to children, at an appropriate level, through assemblies, class discussions, circle times and 1:1 as appropriate. This policy is referred to via the newsletter (with an electronic link) each time it is reviewed/updated.

Monitoring

This policy and its effectiveness will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed annually by the Leaders for Learning Committee.