

COPTHILL SCHOOL

ANTI - BULLYING POLICY

AIMS OF THIS POLICY:

- to provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear;
- to reduce and to eradicate wherever possible instances in which children are made to feel unhappy, frightened or excluded;
- to establish a means of dealing with unkindness and bullying, and of providing support to children who have been bullied;
- to ensure that all children and staff are aware of the policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it;
- to meet any legal obligations which rest with the school.

All teaching and non-teaching staff, children and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is. They should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported. As a school, we take bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. **Bullying will not be tolerated.**

Bullying should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Child on child abuse, either physical or sexting, will be dealt with as a child protection concern. Any such incident should be reported immediately to the DSL in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Staff Handbook 6.5). Procedures outlined in that policy will be followed in line with [Keeping children safe in education 2024](#). It should also be remembered that anyone can make a referral to the relevant Children's Social Care Customer Service Team.

This policy has regard to DfE guidance - [Preventing and tackling bullying - July 2017](#) and [Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff 2014](#)

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is causing intentional hurt to another child or group, either physically or emotionally. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. Bullying may occur directly or through cyber-technology (see below). Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Forms of Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying:

- Emotional
 - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical
 - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Religious/ cultural
 - focusing on the issue of religious or cultural beliefs
- SEN / Disability
 - focusing on the issue of a child's learning difficulties or disability
- Racist
 - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual
 - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

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- Homophobic
 - because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal
 - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber
 - via online activity such as messages, email, social websites, internet chat rooms, online games
 - Mobile phone threats by text messaging & calls
 - sexting
 - misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

All children and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included. Bullying, of any sort, is, therefore, unacceptable and children who experience bullying will be supported. We recognise the seriousness of all forms of bullying, both physical and emotional, and the effects that bullying can have on a child's feelings of worth and on their school work. Bullying may cause psychological damage. The school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

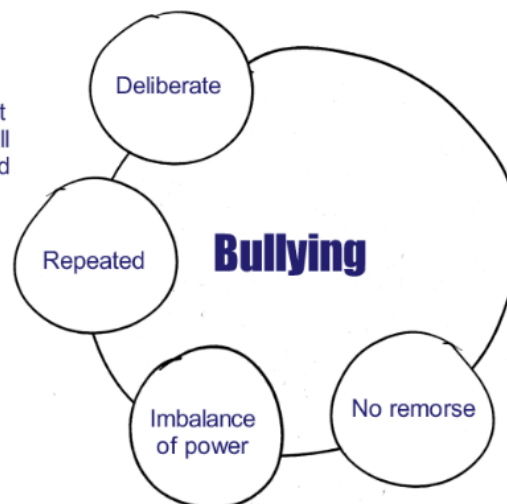
Part 1: What is bullying?

Fall outs

Some unacceptable behaviours are not bullying, these are often described by professionals as 'relational conflict' and what they mean by this is that they are general 'fall outs' that happen in every day school life and are not bullying.

There is a clear difference between fall outs and bullying. We know that bullying is deliberate or intentional, that it is repeated and there is an imbalance of power.

There is usually no real remorse shown.



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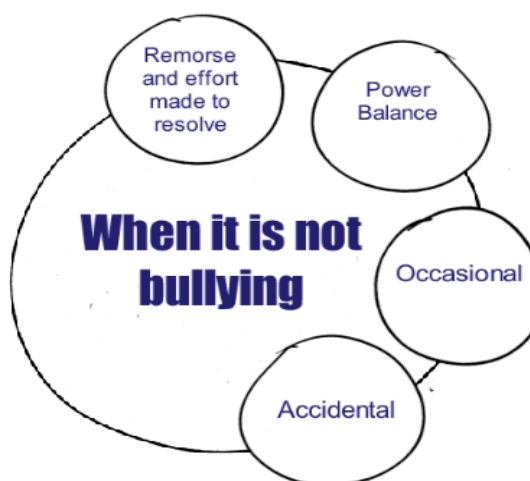
When it is not bullying

Unacceptable behaviour, including fall outs, should not be ignored. Schools, colleges and early years settings should follow their policies for dealing with this.

However, when it's not bullying, it tends to involve:

- No imbalance of power
- A one-off incident
- An accidental situation

Perhaps most importantly, the people involved are sorry that it happened and will usually make an effort to make amends.



STAFF TRAINING

Appropriate training is given to staff so that the principles of this policy are understood and action is defined to resolve and prevent problems. The Headteacher/DSL, deputy DSL and all members of the SLT can provide sources of support. Any amendments to this policy are brought to the attention of staff in staff meetings and the amended policy is displayed in the staffroom.

The Staff Code of Conduct (6.13) includes guidance for staff on their own professional relationships, use of mobile phones, participation in online social networking sites and blogs and use of email.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened about coming to school;
- doesn't want to come to school;
- feels ill in the morning; changes their usual routine;
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- goes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous when a cyber message is received;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone within school is expected to:

- act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another.

Children are encouraged to:

- report all incidents to staff and report suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report;
- support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe, and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Parents can help by:

- supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures;
- discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way.

The following procedure offers a guideline as to what to do when an instance of bullying is reported. However, staff should use their own judgement, depending on the nature of the case. See also *Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy (2.6)*. **The overall priority is that immediate and appropriate action is taken by all the staff involved.**

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF BULLYING

It must be easy to report bullying, including cyber-bullying and bullying outside of school

STAFF WILL:

Provide support to children

- Reassure them that they do not deserve it and it is not their fault.
- Assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- Try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- Engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.

Try to ensure that they feel safe.

- Ask them to report immediately any further incidents.
- Affirm that it can and will be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does.

Staff will interview the child (or children) involved separately and will:

- Listen to their version of events.
- Talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the incident(s).
- Reinforce the message that such behaviour is not acceptable and that they expect it to stop.
- Seek a commitment to this end.
- Affirm that it is right for children to let us know when they are being bullied.
- Adopt a joint problem-solving approach where this is appropriate.
- Consider sanctions under our school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy (2.6).
 - Sanctions must reflect the seriousness of an incident and deter other incidents. In accordance with the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy, strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.
- Advise those children responsible that they will be monitoring closely to ensure it does not happen again.
- Contact the parents of the children involved at an early stage.

- Keep records of incidents.

All cases should be carefully monitored during the following weeks to ensure that the child is behaving appropriately. Victims will be appropriately supported and monitored to ensure satisfactory long term recovery.

Form Teachers/Tutors/Lower & Upper School Leaders and/or the Headteacher will follow up after incidents to check there is no continuation and a satisfactory outcome.

Records are kept to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted and to enable patterns to be identified. Also to this end, all incidents of unkindness are logged on our Pupil Info database.

CREATING AN ANTI-BULLYING CLIMATE IN SCHOOL/ PREVENTION

Our school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where children behave well and where staff and children take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being and include and support each other. We actively encourage our children to respect the fundamental British values of individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of others, recognising the need to discuss differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.

We promote appropriate behaviour through direct teaching and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where these skills are learned and practised. Our aim is to create a climate where bullying is not accepted by anyone within the school community. Children should be clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

Our curriculum will be used to:

- raise awareness about bullying and how to prevent it;
- increase understanding for victims;
- teach children how to constructively manage their relationships with others;
- create an anti-bullying climate in school;
- raise awareness of our anti-bullying policy.

Opportunities to use the curriculum in this way will include: Circle Time; PSHE lessons; Assemblies; Stories; role play/drama; projects; discussions about current affairs.

All children are taught how to stay safe online and about cyberbullying through awareness days, PSHE, Tutor sessions, Assemblies and IT lessons. Children will be aware of the IT Charter and appropriate monitoring will take place by staff to ensure any cyberbullying issues are dealt with effectively and swiftly. Staff will also support parents and take action if made aware of external cyber-bullying issues.

Copthill's Three Rules, as set out in the School Rules policy, are displayed throughout school and remind children of their need to be Respectful, Responsible and Reflective at all times.

The School Council offers a forum in which concerns about bullying can be discussed, such as where and when bullying occurs in school. Staff will supervise, and try to eliminate any unsafe area that the School Council reports.

ADVICE TO PARENTS

If your child tells you of an incident which has upset them - Please do the following:

- Find out who they told and what they did or said they would do about the issue

- Praise them for following the right procedure and trying to resolve it themselves
- Reassure them that the school will be able to sort out their concern

If for some reason your child has not informed their teacher or an adult at school then preferably encourage them to see their form teacher in the morning or pass on the details personally.

If the procedure has been followed then the form teacher will be aware of the issue and have dealt with it appropriately. Please see the form teacher for follow up actions and information.

If you have further concerns over the issue please make an appointment to see your child's Department Leader/Headteacher.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we ask that this is brought to the Head's notice. If the Head cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure.

EVALUATING OUR POLICY

We will evaluate our anti-bullying policy using the following measures:

- the numbers of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period;
- children's perceptions of bullying in school through structured discussions in class and circle time;
- from the comments received through feedback, for example, from the School Council;
- from responses given in parent and pupil questionnaires.

RELATED POLICIES & INFORMATION

Our Anti-bullying Policy links with a number of other school policies:

- 1.7 Complaints Policy
- 1.8 Equal Opportunities Policy
- 2.1 Rewards Policy
- 2.6 Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- 3.18 PSHE Policy & Scheme of Work
- 6.5 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* reference to child-on-child abuse
- 6.13 Staff Code of Conduct