

Anti-Bullying Policy



Rationale

At Howes Primary School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. At Howes we say to children “we are a Telling school”. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening needs to tell someone. The ‘Helping Hands of Howes’ is a way of a child identifying people who they could tell or talk to.

1. What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be

- **Emotional** – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg hiding books, gestures, name calling)
- **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **sexual:** unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or sexist comments
- **Verbal** – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber** – all areas of the internet, such as email and misuse of social network sites and also mobile phone intimidation such as text messaging and calls

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not odd occasion falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional ‘joke’ is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of a child’s development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

It is bullying if it is done repeatedly and on purpose to other children.

2. Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Pupils who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour may copy this anti social behaviour. In school we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

3. Signs and symptoms

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

- Doesn't want to come to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence
- Feels ill in the morning
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions that go missing or damaged
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is bullying to other children

4. Role of Parents

Parents have an important part to play in our anti bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behavior in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their usual standard.
- Always take an active role in your child's education, enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent time with etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- If you feel a child has bullied your child, **DO NOT** approach that child in the playground or on their way home. It is very important that you inform the school immediately.
- It is important that you do not advise your child to fight back or to repeat the bullies behaviour. This will only make the situation worse.
- Tell your child it is not their fault they are being bullied.
- Reinforce the school policy on bullying and ensure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform the school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.
- Cyber-bullying is an area that has developed in recent years. Please be aware of what, who and how your child has access to the internet. The following site offers useful information to parents. <http://www.ceop.gov.uk/>

5. Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

Allegations and incidents of bullying at Howes Primary School will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All of those

involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will support all children involved whilst the allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. The following procedures are to be followed:

- Incidents of reported bullying need to be reported initially to team leader and to the Deputy/Headteacher. Team leaders will speak to all children involved about the incident separately or if appropriate as a group.
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
- Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach through circle times and/or drama activities which will move children on from having them to justify their behaviour.
- Appropriate action will be taken to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied i.e. loss of privileges, spending playtime and lunchtimes with an adult, be withdrawn from participation in a school visit, club or event not essential to the curriculum.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- An attempt will be made and support given to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her behaviour.
- If the bullying continues or in more serious cases of bullying parents will be informed and invited into the school for a meeting to discuss the problem
- Mediating meetings, with both parents and pupils present may be used to resolve the issues
- In serious cases incident will be recorded and kept in the Incident File.
- In repeated or serious cases the school may follow the following sanctions: lunch time exclusion, fixed term exclusion, permanent exclusion.

6. Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- Regular PSCHE teaching following the agreed scheme of work and SEAL resource
- Taking part in national anti bullying week
- Awareness through anti bullying assemblies
- Circle time
- Drama/role play activities
- Playground buddies for children who are experiences difficulties settling into school and use of friendship stop
- The following of the whole school behavior policy which includes using praise and rewards to reinforce good behavior.
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another.
- Sharing the key messages from the child friendly Anti-bullying leaflet as created by the schools council.

7. Monitoring of Policy

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and through staff meetings and will be reviewed annually.

September 2015