

MIDDLEMARCH SCHOOL

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING AT MIDDLEMARCH SCHOOL

At Middlemarch Junior School, we are aware that pupils may be bullied in any school or setting, and recognise that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to any cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils.

In line with the Equality Act 2010 it is essential that our school:

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

This policy is closely linked with our Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy, our Safeguarding Policy, our school Code of Conduct and the school's Vision, Aims and Values.

Principles

It is the responsibility of the governing body and the Headteacher to ensure that all members of the school community work within a safe and enabling environment.

Pupils are valued as individuals, are respectful and respected as members of the school and the community (Middlemarch school aims).

Aims

We are determined to promote and develop a school ethos where bullying behaviour is regarded as unacceptable and to ensure a safe and secure environment is sustained for all pupils.

We aim for all pupils to reach their potential academically, socially and personally through learning and playing in a safe and secure environment.

Bullying Definition

At Middlemarch Junior School, we discuss what bullying is, as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, with all pupils through assemblies and PSHE lessons. We agree that:

- Bullying is usually physical hurting of another child, name calling, nasty looks or intentionally leaving people out.
- Bullying usually happens when the relationship is imbalanced.
- Bullying is usually on-going.

Types of Bullying

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual bullying', which can occur in and outside of school. Occurring beyond the school day, and entering people's homes, cyber-bullying presents new challenges to those who monitor bullying within the school community.

Racist Bullying

This refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that make the person feel unwelcome, marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity culture, faith community, national origin or national status.

Homophobic Bullying

This occurs when bullying is motivated by an actual or perceived view of a person's sexuality - a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual, transgender people, or just those who are seen as being 'different'.

Vulnerable Groups

We recognise that some groups of pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- Children Looked After
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Children from ethnic minorities
- Children entitled to Free School Meals
- Children for whom English is an Additional Language

Bullying Prevention

Preventing and raising awareness of bullying is essential to keeping incidents in our school to a minimum. Through whole school and class assemblies, as well as PSHE lessons, pupils are given regular opportunities to discuss what bullying is - as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, such as two friends falling out, or a one-off argument. Pupils are taught to tell an adult in school if they are concerned that someone is being bullied.

Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy

Our Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy is based in the belief that good behaviour can be taught and needs to be modelled. Central to our ethos is an understanding of the importance of building positive relationships with the aim of preventing hostile and inappropriate behaviour.

Responding to Bullying

All cases of alleged bullying should be reported to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher or senior member of staff.

In any case of alleged bullying, either the Classteacher, the Headteacher, or a senior member of staff should first establish the facts from both parties involved, building an accurate picture of events over time, through speaking to the alleged perpetrator(s), victim(s) and adult witnesses, as well as parents and pupil witnesses if necessary and appropriate.

If the allegation of bullying is upheld, the Headteacher (or senior leader) should seek to use a restorative approach with the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) together. The perpetrator(s) should fully understand the consequences of their actions on the victim(s), and apologise without reservation. Both parties should be clear that a repeat of these behaviours will not be acceptable.

All bullying incidents must be recorded. Parents of both parties should be informed. If the situation does not improve, the Headteacher (or senior leader) should meet with the parent(s) of the bullying child(ren) and agree clear expectations and boundaries which would be shared with the pupils involved. Any further incidents should lead to intervention (e.g. through outside agencies), further monitoring, support and punitive sanctions as deemed necessary. Any necessary action should be taken until the bullying has stopped.

Signs of Bullying

Staff should be vigilant in looking out for signs of bullying or other child protection issues including:

Physical: unexplained bruised, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches and /or bedwetting.

Emotional: losing interest in school, withdrawn, secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why unhappy, high level of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, lack of confidence, headaches and stomach aches, signs of depression.

Behavioural: asking not to be taken to school, coming home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asking for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties and /or truancy.

MOST IMPROTANTLY CHILDREN ARE REMINDED TO TELL SOMEONE IF THEY ARE BEING BULLIED AND PARENTS ENCOURAGED TO INFORM A MEMBER OF STAFF ABOUT ANY CONCERNS THEY MAY HAVE.

WE HAVE AN OPEN DOOR POLICY, A MEMBER OF STAFF WILL ALWAYS LISTEN!