

Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to outline for staff, pupils, parents and governors what is meant by bullying and how this can be identified. It also outlines the steps we take to ensure that such incidents are minimised and the procedure we school follow if such an incident takes place.

This policy has been written in consultation with children, parents, staff and governors of Great Wood School. The '*Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies*' published by the Department for Education in October 2014 has been used.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

The following criteria will be shared with the children through the '*SEAL: Say no to bullying*' curriculum materials and is used by school to determine if bullying is taking place:

1. It does not happen just once; it goes on over time and happens again and again – it is **repeated**.
2. It is **deliberate** and **intentional** – hurting someone on purpose – it is not accidentally hurting someone.
3. It is **unfair** / there is an **unequal power balance** (imbalance of power) – the person/people doing the bullying is/are stronger or there are more of them or they have 'influence', higher status or power. Even if they are enjoying it, the person they are bullying is not.

Cyberbullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 empowers Headteachers to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site and empowers members of staff to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour. This is pertinent to incidents of online-bullying or other online safety incidents covered by this policy, which may take place outside of the school, but is linked to membership of the school. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Homophobic Bullying

Anyone can be targeted for homophobic bullying and the school aims to raise awareness with pupils and parents as part of the general anti-bullying strategy. The use of homophobic language eg “those trainers are so gay” will not be tolerated and will be treated by staff as a serious incident in accordance with the school’s Behaviour Policy.

Bullying linked to Race, Religion and Culture

The Commission for Racial Equality (2009) defines a racial incident as a verbal or physical attack on property or person, which is suffered by individuals or groups because of their colour, race, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

As with any other incident of bullying, staff will ensure that if a report of racism is made, they will support the victim sensitively. The incident will be reported to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to be investigated. If the incident is found to be racist in nature, even if it is deemed to be of a relatively minor nature, appropriate action will be taken, including alerting parents.

As well as supporting the victim of such an incident, the perpetrator will also be supported effectively so that they are aware of their behaviour and why it is unacceptable.

The role of the witness

Witnessing bullying behaviour is a powerful situation to be in. If witnesses do nothing, they can act as an audience, which can encourage the children doing the bullying, even if they do not mean to. At Great Wood, we teach the children that the witness needs to respond in a way to make bullying less likely:

- challenge the children doing the bullying (in certain circumstances);
- ‘scoop up’ the child who is being bullied (‘come on, you’re needed in our game now’ spoken to the child as two children take an arm each and lead the child away);
- tell an adult;
- talk to others;
- be kind to the person experiencing bullying.

We recognise the feelings that witnesses may experience and understand why they sometimes don’t tell about the bullying they have seen. However, if bullying is to be tackled, all children have a role to play. If we feel that a witness has not responded appropriately to stop the bullying, or even encouraged the bullying behaviour, we make take disciplinary action against them as well. The witness may also need support which will be provided by the Learning Mentor.

Prevention

Our response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. At Great Wood we have a number of planned approaches to prevent bullying happening in the first place which includes:

- A yearly theme about Bullying, which links to National Anti-Bullying week (second half of the Autumn Term). This outlines the definition of bullying and the way in which our school deals with such incidents. Children are taught about the part they play in preventing bullying. They are encouraged to tell if they are being bullied, are the witness to bullying incidents or if they know that someone else is being bullied.
- The theme is also taught during PSHEC lessons using resources such as posters and films as well as circle time and drama activities to understand:
 - what it is
 - how it feels
 - why people bully
 - how we can prevent and respond to it (focus on telling)
 - how they can use their social, emotional and behavioural skills to tackle this crucial problem
- Through our broad and balanced curriculum, we openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or

sexuality. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.

- Our E-safety week focuses on the inappropriate use of technology and how this can be used to bully others. Children are taught key messages in assemblies, class and through special performances and plays.
- We have a well-established Values Curriculum which is referenced throughout our PSHEC Curriculum. We explore a different Value each month over a two-year cycle which includes: tolerance, honesty, compassion, trust, acceptance, responsibility, kindness, courage and respect. The Values are illustrated and explored through children's literature, historical and current events, film, discussion and drama in assemblies and class. Staff refer to them when speaking to children about their behaviour and attitude to learning. At the end of the half term, a class writes and present an assembly to parents and the whole school to show how they use the Value.
- We make playtimes fun and active using different zones which appeal to the interests of all children. The School Council consult the views of the school when looking at playtime equipment.
- Y6 Infant Buddies complete the 'Young Leader' training so that they can support activities on the infant playground to engage as many children as possible in being active and playing with others.
- The Learning Mentor monitors the playground, chatting to children who may seem lonely and helps to mediate disputes that may occur to ensure they are dealt with effectively.
- Mid-day supervisors meet half termly to discuss the needs of particular children and share ideas about how to make the lunchtimes more enjoyable and active periods of the school day. The Learning Mentor and Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher also attend so that their views can be listened to and implemented where appropriate.
- Staff at Great Wood School take all incidents of reported bullying seriously and take steps to ensure that pupils in their care who experience difficulties, are treated sensitively. The children, when asked in the annual pupil survey, reported that they have a good relationship with both teachers and teaching assistants at Great Wood School and would speak to them if they were being bullied or saw it taking place.
- The School pays for the Coram Life Education Bus to visit school each year to work with pupils. Anti-bullying is part of these workshops and supports the wider curriculum.
- Involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Our aim is that parents feel confident that we will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child.
- Celebrate success in many ways throughout school to create a positive school ethos.
- Make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying.
- Provide regular staff training so that staff understand the principles and purpose of our Anti-bullying policy, their legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. We also review curriculum materials.
- Make staff aware that some children are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may be severely affected by it, such as those with special educational needs or disabilities. Others may be particularly vulnerable because they are going through a personal or family crisis, or suffering from a health problem. Children in care that are frequently on the move may be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. Those with caring responsibilities may be vulnerable because they are socially isolated. These vulnerable young people may also be at risk of turning to social media for consolation or to get their own back by cyberbullying. Therefore, counselling and education on e-safety can help.

Procedure for dealing with incidents, including follow up

The member of staff who is designated with overall responsibility for bullying is the Deputy Headteacher, which means that **all** incidents of bullying, which are disclosed to staff, should be reported to them. All incidents will be recorded in the school's CPOMS system

All staff have a duty of care to ensure that a child who reports an incident of bullying is treated sensitively and supported appropriately. The Deputy Headteacher, in discussion with the child's class teacher and the school's Learning Mentor, will be involved in the discussion regarding investigation of a reported incident. If the incident is found to be bullying, then parents the child who is being bullied and perpetrator/s will be informed.

In consultation with the class teacher, Learning Mentor, child and parents, a decision regarding actions required will be recorded on CPOMS. Incidents of bullying recorded in the log will be reviewed termly by the Deputy Headteacher, in consultation with class teachers and the Learning Mentor.

Procedure for dealing with incidents reported by parents

If a parent has concerns that their child is being bullied, or has suffered a bullying incident, they are encouraged to discuss this with their child's class teacher, by arranging an appointment with the School Office, who will then investigate and inform the Deputy Headteacher – see above. Parents will be kept informed of further actions.

Support for children (including witnesses), parents and staff during and immediately after incidents

Children who have been bullied will be supported appropriately at Great Wood School so that they feel that they have been listened to and that they have some control over the situation they find themselves in. They will be involved in discussions to ensure that actions are seen as positive and support the child. The Learning Mentor is likely to be involved with the child and parents as part of the agreed action. This may include keeping an eye on the child at break/lunch time to regular sessions each week. All staff involved with the child will be kept informed of the agreed actions. Although the school has range of strategies to support children who have been bullied, all incidents are dealt with on an individual basis.

Disciplinary measures

We will apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. This will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. We will also consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves through work with the Learning Mentor.

Procedure for dealing with incidents reported by adults

If an adult within school feels that they have been bullied by another adult at the school, or have been subjected to a bullying incident, then this should be reported to the Headteacher. If such an incident involves the Headteacher, then the person is advised to contact the Chair of Governors.

Implementation and review

The Deputy Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is carried out, publicised and reviewed by pupils, parents and governors on a regular basis. Links to useful organisations are available on the school's website for parents and pupils.

The school will continue to monitor the opinions of staff, parents and pupils on a yearly basis through the use of the Staff Questionnaire, Pupil Attitude Questionnaire and Parental Survey.

Reviewed and Approved by Governors:	Spring 2022	Next Review	Spring 2025
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