



## **ANTI - BULLYING POLICY**

Froebel House School does not accept bullying and will challenge it effectively to ensure the safety and happiness of the pupils. Froebel House School will make every effort to show that the school cares and will make it very clear to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Froebel House School will ensure that everyone in school has discussed and understood the problem of bullying and agreed on good and bad practice.

### **The nature of bullying**

1. There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:
  - Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
  - Repeated often over a period of time
  - Difficult for victims to defend themselves against
  
2. Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:
  - Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
  - Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
  - Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours
  
3. Name calling is the most direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics, but pupils can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour; sexual orientation; or some form of disability.

Children will be made aware of this during various assemblies and whenever an incident of bullying arises. Children are told to report any incident of bullying to staff or L. A. Roberts and all incidents are taken seriously: discussion will follow with the bully and the person bullied and, if the incident is serious enough, parents will be involved. All incidents should be reported to L. A. Roberts and the necessary action will be taken. Children who bully will be warned that this behaviour will not be tolerated and if it is severe and persistent, exclusion will take place. Hopefully this can be avoided through discussion with all parties involved; the offender will be punished initially through loss of merits due to a full order mark. As the merit cards go home each Monday parents will be aware of the problem. The bully may also be excluded from the playground for a period of time. Bullying rarely happens in a classroom situation but staff are aware that a constant watch for such behaviour must be kept.

Direct action will remind pupils that bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Damage, injury or theft demand a serious response which will ultimately be the exclusion of the bully.

Staff will record serious incidents of bullying and incidents will be followed up to check that the bullying hasn't started again. This should be done within two weeks and again within the following half term. Immediately after intervention the bullying is likely to stop. However, it can be very persistent and may reoccur. If pupils expect follow up they are unlikely to start bullying again.

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring by L. A. Roberts identifies progress and enables follow up showing whether the policy is really effective. Recording should only take place if the incident is serious.

Follow up the policy with regular reminders.

## **Evaluation**

Use data from monitoring and feedback which staff and pupils provide to review and update the policy at the end of each school year. As all children are collected by parents at the end of the school day, bullying outside the school premises does not occur.

## **Who is involved in bullying and where?**

1. Both boys and girls bully others. Usually, boys are bullied by boys but girls are bullied by girls and boys. The most common perpetrators are individual boys or groups of several boys. Children who bully others can come from any kind of family, regardless of social class or cultural background.
2. Usually one pupil starts bullying a victim. There are often other pupils present. These may:
  - help the bully by joining in
  - help the bully by watching, laughing and shouting encouragement
  - remain resolutely uninvolved
  - help the victim directly, tell the bullies to stop, or fetch an adult
3. Any child can be bullied, and although none of these characteristics can excuse it, certain factors can make bullying more likely:
  - lacking close friends in school
  - being shy
  - an over-protective family environment
  - being from a different or ethnic group from the majority
  - being different in some obvious respect – such as stammering
  - having Special Educational Needs or a disability
  - behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a 'nuisance'
  - possessing expensive accessories such as mobile phones or computer games
4. Some victims may behave passively or submissively, signalling to others that they would not retaliate if attacked or insulted. They may benefit from assertiveness training. Others may behave aggressively, sometimes

provoking others to retaliate. Some pupils are both bullies and victims; approximately 20% of victims also act as bullies although tending not to direct their aggression towards their own aggressors. They may come from disturbed family backgrounds and are likely to need special help in changing their behaviour.

5. Verbal bullying is common amongst boys and girls. Boys experience more physical violence and threats than girls, although physical attacks on girls by other girls are becoming more frequent. Girls tend to use indirect methods which can be more difficult to detect.
6. Being bullied tends to decrease with age, probably because older pupils are developing coping skills. In addition, older pupils meet fewer people who are physically stronger than them. However, attitudes to victims tend to become less sympathetic over the age range 8 - 15 years, especially in older boys. Physical bullying declines with age, but indirect bullying increases.
7. Victims may be reluctant to attend school and are often absent. They may be more anxious and insecure than others, having fewer friends and often feeling unhappy and lonely. Victims can suffer from low self-esteem and negative self-image, looking upon themselves as failures – feeling stupid, ashamed and unattractive.
8. Victims may present a variety of symptoms to health professionals, including fits, faints, vomiting, limb pains, paralysis, hyperventilation, visual symptoms, headaches, stomach aches, bed wetting, sleeping difficulties and sadness. Being bullied may lead to depression or, in the most serious cases, attempted suicide. It may lead to anxiety, depression, loneliness and lack of trust in adult life.

### **Pupils' attitudes to bullying**

9. Pupils' understanding varies with age. Infants may confuse bullying with fighting and nasty experiences generally: juniors develop a more mature understanding. But difficulties in identifying bullying in 4 to 7 year olds should not prevent schools taking action.
10. About 75 – 80% of pupils in surveys say they would not join in, or would like to help a bullied child. Fewer say they would actually help. About one fifth of pupils are less sympathetic. Girls seem more supportive of victims than boys, but not necessarily more likely to intervene.
11. Families are told about bullying more often than teachers: older pupils are less likely to tell at all. A 'culture of silence' persists; many victims – a majority of secondary-aged pupils - have not told anyone in authority of the bullying. The 1997 survey found that 30% of victims had not told anyone. Often teachers and parents need to take steps to uncover bullying.

12. Most victims who do tell teachers or parents describe the outcome as positive. Victims need help and support. However, a small minority of victims reported bullying getting worse, especially when teachers were told. It is important that claims of bullying are taken seriously; a half hearted response might make the problems worse.

### **Bullying by race, gender, sexual orientation or disability**

13. In racist bullying, a child is targeted for representing a group, and attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Racist bullying is therefore likely to hurt not only the victim, but also other pupils from the same group, and their families. In the 1999 MacPherson Report, racist bullying was defined as ‘any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person’. Anti-bullying policies should cover racist bullying and all incidents should be recorded. Incidents can include:
  - Verbal abuse by name calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
  - Physical threats or attacks
  - Wearing of provocative badges or insignia
  - Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
  - Inciting others to behave in a racist way
  - Racist graffiti or other written insults – even against food, music, dress or customs
  - Refusing to co-operate in work or in play

### **Strategies to combat bullying**

1. Bullying can be discussed as part of the curriculum, but teachers also need general strategies to deal with the problem. Whilst they should try strategies such as those described below, schools may find that stronger measures are needed in the more serious and persistent cases.
2. **Where other strategies do not resolve the problem, permanent exclusion may be justified in the most serious and persistent cases, particularly where violence is involved.**
3. Five key points
  - ❖ Never ignore suspected bullying
  - ❖ Don't make premature assumptions
  - ❖ Listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth

- ❖ Adopt a problem solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves
- ❖ Follow up repeatedly checking bullying has not resumed

### **Curricular approaches to bullying**

Through the curriculum it is possible to explore such issues as:

- Why do people bully each other?
- What are the effects of bullying on the bullied, on bullies and on bystanders?
- What can we do to stop bullying?

### **Co-operative Group Work**

4. When this is integrated into normal classroom practice, pupils can:
  - explore issues and controversies by considering different points of view
  - be more tolerant of others and more willing to listen
  - trust those of the opposite gender and those from other ethnic groups
  - become better integrated into the peer group
5. Working together as colleagues, relationships sometimes develop into real friendships. Potential victims of bullying can be drawn into working groups with other children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.

### **Befriending**

1. Befriending involves assigning selected pupil volunteers to 'be with' or 'befriend' peers whom teachers have referred.

### **Befrienders**

- Need friendly personal qualities
  - Give support with emotional and social problems – newness to a school, difficulty making friends, upset at separation or loss, being bullied or socially excluded
2. The befriended feel more positive about themselves having had someone to talk to about their problems. Befrienders feel more confident and value other people more. The school becomes safer and more caring as relationships improve generally.

### **Mediation by adults**

Methods focus on pupils who have been bullying others regularly for some time, as well as those being bullied. The aim is to establish ground rules that will enable the pupils to co-exist at the school. There is a simple script available:

- hold brief, non-confrontational, individual ‘chats’ with each pupil in a quiet room without interruptions – the bullying pupils first
- get agreement with each that the bullied pupil is unhappy and that they will help improve the situation – if they cannot suggest ways to do this be prescriptive
- chat supportively with the bullied pupil – helping them to understand how to change if thought to have provoked the bullying
- check whether the bullying starts again or targets another pupil
- if bullying persists, combine the method with some other action targeted specifically at that child, such as parental involvement or change of class

### **Working with victims**

1. The behaviour of certain pupils can contribute to bullying, though this in no way justifies it. Some pupils find it hard to concentrate in class, are hyperactive, or behave in ways that irritate others. They may get angry easily and fight back when attacked or even slightly provoked – and a number of classmates and adults, including the teacher may dislike them. They may also bully weaker pupils.
2. Where pupils do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying Froebel House School will need to take tougher action to deal with persistent and violent bullying. As part of our discipline policy, we have a sufficient range of sanctions to deal with this type of bullying. Sanctions might include:
  - removal from the group (in class);
  - withdrawal or break from lunchtime privileges;

- order marks and loss of merits;
  - withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are; not an essential part of the curriculum;
  - fixed period exclusion
3. Where serious violence is involved, L A Roberts will permanently exclude a pupil. Appeal panels will be told that they should not seek to overrule such a decision on appeal.

### **Working with parents**

1. Parental support is often a key to success or failure in anti-bullying initiatives. Though not always apparent, parental approval is important to children and young people of all ages. The majority of parents support anti-bullying measures and are keen to participate. Consultation is important, helping create an ethos in which positive behaviour is encouraged and bullying considered unacceptable.
2. However, a significant few do hold unhelpful attitudes saying bullying is an inevitable (even desirable) part of growing up and encouraging bullied children to 'stand up for themselves' rather than seek help. While understandable, this conflicts with the aim of most anti-bullying initiatives to encourage children to tell staff about bullying rather than fight back.
3. Useful approaches include:
  - regular consultation and communication
  - providing information about the nature and effects of bullying by means of posters displayed in the school.
  - advising parents of possible consequences of their children bringing valuable items to school

### **Parents reporting bullying**

4. Parents may contact schools, often in some distress, to report that their child has been bullied. Their concerns must be taken seriously. Unfortunately, they may sometimes be faced with disbelief or hostility, or made to feel they are to blame. However, such problems can be avoided.
5. The first point of contact for parents is likely to be L A Roberts or a class teacher. It is important that all staff know the school policy and when to refer parents to L A Roberts. Good practice includes:
  - Recognising that the parent may be angry and upset
  - Keeping an open mind –bullying can be difficult to detect, so a lack of staff awareness does not mean no bullying occurs
  - Remaining calm and understanding
  - Making it clear that the school does care and that something will be done
  - Explaining the school policy, making sure procedures are followed

6. When a case is referred to them staff should :
  - Ask for details, record the information and discuss with L A Roberts
  - Make a further appointment to explain actions and find out if it has stopped
7. Many of the same points apply when the school has to tell parents that their child is involved in bullying. Parents are more likely to accept a calm approach, following the agreed guidelines of an anti-bullying policy they are familiar with. This helps to defuse anger and resentment. Specific requirements depend on whether the child in question is the victim or the bully.

### **Parents of bullies and victims**

8. Parents should be involved in a case of (alleged) bullying by being invited in to school to discuss the child's behaviour. Such discussions are potentially extremely difficult and it is better to involve parents constructively at an early stage rather than only as a last resort. Avoid using parents (or the threat of them) as a form of punishment for bullying, as this undermines the co-operative ethos that parental involvement intends to foster.
9. Often it is helpful to use a problem – solving approach in the first instance: “It seems your son/daughter and (other child) have not been getting on very well lately” rather than “Your son/daughter has been bullying (other child)”. Blame is much more likely to make the parent react defensively and make it much harder to reach a resolution.
10. The parents of a victim are likely to have one main concern: that the bullying stops – but some may also want the perpetrators punished. Strong measures – including exclusion – **will** sometimes be necessary. Comprehensive consultation, awareness raising and communication are the best preparation for such situations.
11. Some claims of bullying may turn out to be false or exaggerated. However, whatever the victim's previous history, all claims of bullying should be treated seriously and not dismissed without further enquiries being made.

### **Developing a playground policy**

1. Playground policies should set out clear guidelines for managing pupil behaviour during breaks and lunchtimes and involve all staff, especially lunchtime supervisors, as well as pupils.

2. Effective supervision involves moving around the grounds, talking briefly with pupils and anticipating potential difficulties. A suspected problem should be quietly and promptly investigated and reported to L A Roberts
3. Schools need efficient communication between supervisors and those responsible for co-ordinating the behaviour policy – and clear definition of roles and responsibilities of supervisors and teachers when on duty.
4. Supervisors' authority is not always acknowledged, undermining efforts to manage behaviour. Teaching staff should fully support them in exercising authority.
5. Useful strategies include:
 

A 'Playground Incident Book' which records discipline problems and is given to L A Roberts who will deal with any problems.
6. Sometimes adults can only observe pupil interaction – being unable to hear the content of the conversation, Apparent fighting or bullying can simply be rough– and–tumble play or 'play-fighting', which some children enjoy. Watch for:
  - smiling or laughing (but see below)
  - 'mock' blows or kicks which do not connect – or do so only softly
  - chasing each other
7. By contrast, pupils who are being attacked or physically bullied often:
  - frown or look unhappy or angry
  - try to move away from the aggressor
  - do not take turns, the aggressor remaining dominant throughout
  - attract the other pupil's attention
8. When primary children incorporate fantasy themes into play-fighting, they commonly adopt angry-looking facial expressions rather than smile. This often leads supervisors to assume they are acting aggressively. Asking participants in a friendly tone about what they are doing should clarify matters. Boys traditionally engage in this more than girls but the difference may be decreasing and supervisors should avoid assuming that all fighting among girls is aggressive. In most cases, play-fighting does not escalate into aggressive fighting. The majority of children and adolescents appreciate the difference and are skilled at keeping their interactions playful.
9. Knowing who has persistently been bullied or is bullying can increase vigilance, but avoid labelling individuals with terms like 'bully' or

‘troublemaker’ since this could lead to incorrect interpretation of incidents or a self – fulfilling prophecy.

10. Being alone a lot, being over submissive or disrupting others’ games can place some children at greater risk of being bullied. Without attaching blame, recognising this may enable supervisors to help. While some pupils are happy to be alone, others would prefer to join in with activities but lack the skills or confidence. Supervisors should help such pupils get involved, whilst preventing their disruption. This should be done subtly to avoid resentment by pupils.
11. Supervisors can help pupils without friends form close relationships by providing opportunities to be together and share common interests.

The playground environment should be secure, safe and easily supervised, promoting;

- Purposeful recreation and reduced boredom
- Reduced playground aggression
- Increased imaginative play
- Improved social skills through provision of meeting places
- More positive relationships and communication between pupils, teachers and supervisors

## **PLAYGROUND POLICY**

Children at Froebel House School are regularly told what sort of behaviour is expected of them in the playground. This is discussed in assemblies, by supervisors and teachers on duty and by class teachers when necessary.

- 1 Fighting is not allowed under any circumstances
- 2 If you are hit, do not hit back – report the incident to the person on duty who will deal with it. Do not take the law into your own hands.
- 3 Children play with children from their own age group.
- 4 The playground is divided into half for early morning, lunch-time and evening play. Years 3 4 5 & 6 stay in one half and Years 1 2 & Reception stay in the other.
- 5 Charging across the playground is not allowed.
- 6 Children are not allowed to pick each other up or swing each other around.
- 7 Any incident of bullying is to be reported to the person on duty and they will report it to L A Roberts.
- 8 Playground rules are posted above each school year’s bench.