



Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by: Headteacher & SLT

Last reviewed: September 2023

Next review: July 2025

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.'

The nature of bullying can be:

- **Physical** – such as hitting or physical intimidating someone, or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact towards someone
- **Attacking property** – such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone's possessions
- **Verbal** – such as name calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language or threatening someone
- **Psychological** – such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people
- **Cyber** – such as using text, email or other social media to write or say hurtful things about someone

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- **Race** (racist bullying)
- **Religion or belief**
- **Culture or class**
- **Gender** (sexist bullying)
- **Special Education Needs (SEN) or disability**
- **Appearance or health conditions**
- **Related to home or other personal situation or another vulnerable group of people**

At Gaskell Primary staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying, either verbal, physical, or indirect will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Research has shown time and time again that the extent of bullying in schools is greatly underestimated.

Particular attention should be paid to cyberbullying (Email, texting, social networking sites) which is becoming increasingly prevalent. It is extremely dangerous as victims are often targeted when they are at their most vulnerable or alone e.g. bedrooms at home. Peer pressure to become involved in social networking/texting makes the victims of bullying increasingly at risk.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

School informs all the children of support agencies e.g. bully free zone, childline through posters and flyers around school. Parents are informed of whole community concerns e.g. issues around cyber-bullying through our texting and newsletter systems.

Prejudice-based incidents

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the head teacher regularly reporting incidents to the governing body. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti bullying interventions.

Strategy for dealing with bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

- Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – Listen, believe, act
- Action will be taken to support the victim throughout and following the process. This will take into account the context and will be personalised to meet the needs of the individual.
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Headteacher
- Discussions with the bully. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at our School.
- If they own up then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Behaviour Policy
- If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts
- Separate discussions with parents of bully and victim
- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, exclusion from school during lunchtimes, exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s)
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition
- As the behaviour of the bully (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities etc can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.
- All incidents are recorded in the behaviour file.
- In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at Gaskell we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:
 - All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils
 - All staff listen, believe, act
 - All staff report cases of bullying (actual or suspected) to the Headteacher.
 - Bullying is discussed regularly during class 'Circle Times'.

Parents

- All parental concerns will be investigated.
- Parents will be involved in any serious cases of bullying.

The policy is reviewed and agreed annually by the Head Teacher.