



DEEPING ST NICHOLAS PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY SEPTEMBER 2015

Statement of Principle

The central purpose of Deeping St Nicholas Primary School is to help all pupils to develop their unique potential to the full. We aim to promote academic achievement in a stimulating and safe environment; bullying will not be tolerated and action will be taken if and when such incidents arise. The purpose of this document is to explore some of the issues associated with bullying and to explain how the school responds both in terms of prevention and in terms of particular incidents.

There is no school, nor age group which can claim to be free of bullying. Furthermore there is no teacher who would condone it. However, there are many myths and misunderstandings surrounding the subject and far too much silence. At Deeping St Nicholas Primary School, together we work against this.

This policy has been drawn up with full consultation of all adults in school and children in KS2. The children spent six hours (over a period of weeks) discussing issues pertinent to this school and, where they were able, sharing their own experiences. This culminated in the "Say No to Bullying" display in the cloakroom.

Bullying is defined as any words or actions used to be cruel to another person. It is persistent, deliberate and often used by a powerful person against a weaker one.

No one at Deeping St Nicholas Primary School will tolerate bullying in any form – physical or emotional – or in any circumstance – child to child, children to child, adult to child, or between adults.

What is bullying?

A bully is a person who deliberately:

- Uses aggression to intimidate
- Uses an unequal power relationship
- Causes emotional or physical distress

Types of Bullying

Bullying can be

- *Physical* - pushing, kicking, hitting, damaging or interfering with property.
- *Verbal* - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, abusive or racist comments
- *Emotional* – excluding, tormenting, threatening, ridicule, humiliation

Children define bullying in different ways and often see their own actions not as bullying but as a form of defence against some previous action of others. Bullies often try to recruit others particularly weaker characters.

Cyber bullying

As technology advances and younger children are given access to mobile phones and the internet through games consoles, the possibility of cyber bullying is very real. This is particularly true of children with older siblings who may be drawn into situations arising at other schools.

Cyber bullying can be defined as the use of *Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else*. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

Cyber bullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or “cyber-stalking” (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification / defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images (including what are sometimes misleadingly referred to as ‘happy slapping’ images); and manipulation.

Some cyber bullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyber bullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that pupils are made aware of the effects of their actions.

We respond to the issue of cyber bullying at Deeping St Nicholas Primary School by making children aware of the potential problems with ICT as a preventative measure. We explain that if they ever experience cyber bullying there are steps they can take to avoid recurrence – for example, advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply; provide advice on ‘blocking’ or

removing people from 'buddy lists'; and ask them to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

How can we tell that bullying may be taking place?

There are many signs of possible bullying for staff to look out for. They may include:

- Being frightened of going to school
- Being unwilling to go to school
- Falling standards of work achieved
- Clothes or belongings may be damaged at school
- Being hungry because lunch has been taken
- Becoming withdrawn
- Being distressed and changing eating habits
- Crying without an obvious reason
- Having nightmares or talking during sleep
- Having unexplained bruises or scratches
- Changing pattern of behaviour

Bullying could be the cause of these symptoms, but it is worth remembering that these are also signs of stress, and could have several causes.

Parents will be encouraged to talk to the child's teachers if there is any possibility that their child may be a victim of bullying.

All allegations of bullying at school will be fully investigated, regardless of the time taken to reach an acceptable conclusion, and the views of children will be taken seriously.

Implications for Pupils

Pupils need to know what bullying is:

- The causes
- The effects
- The methods of prevention

Pupils must understand that they have a duty to themselves and others to prevent bullying, and in taking action should it occur.

This action may be:

- **Direct** - that is intervening in a bullying situation – the difficulties in this are acknowledged and children will be made aware that intervention does not necessarily mean physical intervention
- **Indirect** - reporting bullying or potential bullying to another adult, at home or in school. Reporting bullying is not 'grassing'.

Pupils also have a vital role to play in the prevention of bullying by drawing the attention of adults in the school to anything, which from their point of view, may give them the opportunity for bullying to occur.

- Pupils who tolerate bullies are supporting them.
- Pressure from other pupils can stop bullying.

Pupils must realise that you cannot run away from bullying. Incidents must always be reported in school and the school allowed to take action. Ignoring incidents of bullying only encourages the bully to take further action, either against the same person or against some other individual.

Regular discussions will take place with the children to discuss the places in school where bullying can occur and all reasonable measures will be taken to address the problems of supervision, given that at as a worse case scenario there may be only two adults in school. We recognise that bullying often takes place out of the sight of adults, but will encourage all children and adults to speak up if they feel threatened in any situation that occurs in school. This will be part of the Personal, Social and Health curriculum in school. Each academic year will start with KS2 children considering ways in which we can act together to prevent bullying and updating the cloakroom anti – bullying display.

How we will enable children to prevent bullying?

Children will be taught strategies so that they are more able to stand firm against anyone who may consider bullying them. Bullies always choose their victims carefully, and a feature of the policy is that children will be confident of their own worth so that they do not feel that they have to tolerate any unacceptable behaviour directed towards them.

These strategies will include:

- Raising the profile of bullying in school so that it is acceptable to discuss the problem openly. The secrecy that often surrounds bullying needs to be removed.
- Encouraging children to be more assertive and to say “no” where appropriate.
- Building the confidence and self-esteem of children who could be seen as victims.
- Providing knowledge about any differences in appearance, belief or circumstances so that prejudices can be broken down. Understanding why someone is different encourages tolerance.

We will address bullying in the following ways:

- Children will be encouraged to tell – it will be made clear that no one will tolerate bullying, including the children.
- Adults will always listen to the worries of children and/or other adults
- Children will be taught effective strategies for dealing with bullies so that children are less likely to be victims of bullies.
- If an allegation of bullying is made then every effort will be made to establish the facts. If any action is to be taken it is important to establish the details e.g. when, where, and how did the bullying occur. Children will be spoken to individually and an outcome will be sought which gives the victim the opportunity to explain how they feel to the bully/bullies, and encourages the bully to consider the consequences of his/her actions.
- An incident log will be kept which will enable staff to identify any patterns of bullying behaviour over time.
- Parents of children will be informed if there are any incidents in school which involve their children, either as a victim or as a bully.
- No child will be accused of, or blamed for, an incident until such time as all the facts have been established and the sequence of events has become clear. It is possible that some children may use the opportunity to try to get other children into trouble and it is important that all situations are judged on their own merits without any assumptions being made on the part of the adults investigating.

Whilst we recognise that we are a small, friendly village school where each individual can be valued for the contribution that they make to the school family, it would be naïve to believe that bullying is a problem for other children in other places. We are all committed to do our best to ensure that all the children and adults who spend time at this school are safe and happy in their learning environment.

Resources

Bullying a quick guide. Carrie Herbert. Daniels.
Kidscape. Stop Bullying!

Signed *Anita Bandey* Headteacher Date September 2015

Signed Chair of Governors Date

For Review September 2017