

# SPRINGDALE FIRST SCHOOL

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Agreed by staff: September 2015      Adopted by Governors:

### **Rationale**

**'There is no place for bullying, violence and bad language in our school'.**

This policy supports the aim that all of our children and staff are, 'safe from bullying and discrimination'.

Everyone in our school community plays a part in recognising and preventing all forms of bullying. We are not complacent and are pro-active in working to make our school a happy place.

The school has played an active part in the development of the Poole Anti-Bullying Strategy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the schools Equality Strategy as bullying may be based on prejudice.

### **What is bullying? - Defining the Problem**

Four key characteristics:

- Bullying is characterised by power differential – dominance of the powerful over the powerless.
- Bullying may be verbal, physical or psychological in nature.
- Bullying is generally repeated over a period of time, bringing with it the fear of future occurrence.
- Bullying may take the form of a socially acceptable behaviour but, by the way it is used, causes distress to an individual eg exclusion from a group.

**Bully** – a person or group behaving in a way which meets needs of excitement, status, material gain or group process and does not recognise or meet the needs & rights of people/person who is harmed by that behaviour.

**Victim** – a person or group that is harmed by the behaviour of others and who does not have the resources, status or ability to counteract or stop the harmful behaviour.

### **What can we do to prevent bullying?**

- Ensure that staff, children are aware of this policy and support its implementation
- Listen to children if they think they are being bullied
- Take all complaints seriously and deal with them quickly
- Identify children who may be at risk and high risk areas or times of the day in order to ensure close monitoring.
- Empower children through PSHCE, circle time, assemblies and assertiveness training.
- Provide relevant information to parents and children.
- Promote high self esteem for all members of the school community.

## **What do we do if bullying is perceived to have occurred?**

- Deal with complaints speedily.
- Inform the Head or Deputy Head of any allegations of bullying.
- Listen carefully to those involved.
- Keep appropriate records of incidents; use these records to look for recurring patterns or themes.
- Devise an appropriate response which may include: pastoral support, class or group work through Circle Time or assemblies. Children will be actively involved in identifying the problem and seeking a solution.
- Support the victims by giving them a trusted adult to approach in confidence
- Support the bully by monitoring and rewarding good behaviour patterns, e.g. trouble free playtimes.
- Have clear sanctions for undesirable behaviour, with parental involvement at an early stage.
- Hold follow up meetings with those involved or appropriate adults to ensure that all is well.

## **Cyberbullying**

- The school is aware that the growing use and accessibility of technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, may make children vulnerable to cyber bullying.
- Through ICT sessions & assemblies children are made aware of what constitutes acceptable communication and what to do if they perceive they have been the recipient of unacceptable communication.
- The school is proactive in making parents aware of this issue and how to deal with it e.g. through information sessions.
- All adults within the school community (staff, parents and governors) are expected to uphold high standards in their use of communication through mobiles phones and the internet.
- Potential incidents of cyberbullying are dealt with & recorded in the same way as other forms of bullying.

## **Our Behaviour Policy**

- Our Golden Rules and Behaviour Policy make acceptable behaviour clear.
- The home school agreement makes it clear that families are expected to support the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies. Parents are involved swiftly; their views about the success of the policies are sought.
- There is a specific focus on friendship and bullying during PSHCE sessions.
- Through discussion about feelings and emotions children explore and develop their understanding of each other's problems and develop the vocabulary to express their emotional needs.
- The school engages in specific activities e.g. Friendship Week, to promote the skills needed for successful friendship as well as strategies for coping when tricky situations arise.
- Through child friendly audits we gather information regarding the how safe children feel in school.
- "Worry boxes" are available so that children can share their concerns in confidence.
- We involve children in a problem solving approach to developing our playgrounds and routines, and all staff work hard to make playtime a time that caters for all children's needs. Junior Leaders help to promote positive play and support children who might otherwise be lonely.

## **Monitoring**

Governors monitor recorded incidents of bullying at termly Pastoral Committee meetings. The link governor has a key role in this. Audits of parents and pupils also identify concerns.

## **Appendix 1 – Examples of prejudice based bullying and harassment**

Actions which are associated with bullying may be based on prejudice in which case the comments / actions may reflect this. It is essential that the prejudicial aspect is recorded when reporting the incident.

Examples include:

### **Direct (to the victim)**

Verbal / written threats

Derogatory name calling, abuse, insults, 'jokes', innuendo indicating prejudice / ridicule

Written messages or derogatory comments to the victim including via text, email, social networking sites.

Refusing to co-operate or work with people because of any of the nine protected characteristics.

Abuse of others' personal property.

### **Indirect**

Wearing badges or insignia that are prejudicial.

Actions that incite others to behave in a prejudicial way including forwarding offensive messages, jokes, comments etc.

Graffiti

Bringing offensive materials onto the premises (such as leaflets, comics and promoting Internet sites).

Attempts to recruit for organisations or groups that promote any form of prejudice.

Prejudicial comments in the course of discussion

### **What's special about prejudice based insults?**

#### ***Prejudice based insults are not just used between children:***

- Adults use them towards other adults
- Adults use them towards children
- Children use them towards adults

#### ***These insults may:***

- also insult the family
- also insult others from the same background, the same religion, speakers of the same language

## Appendix 2

### Guidance for parents and children

#### For Parents

- TALK to your child on a regular basis, so any problem is easier to share.
- LISTEN to what they say - and believe it.
- ENCOURAGE your child to feel good about themselves, realising that we are all different and equally important.
- THINK back to your own childhood. How did YOU feel?
- IF you believe your child is being bullied, or is a bully, talk to other adults at home or school and explore the options. Don't stay silent.
- IF your child is a victim assure them that it is not their fault, and that you ARE going to do something to help.
- BE realistic in your expectation if the school have agreed to sort it out. Ongoing problems may take time to resolve.
- TRY to be assertive with the school, not aggressive. Without a good working relationship between parents and school the situation could deteriorate, which won't help you or them.
- ALWAYS remember that children can't solve bullying alone. They NEED support.

#### For Children

##### What you should do:

- TELL someone you can trust! A problem becomes smaller if it is shared.
- WALK away if you can. It's hard to bully someone who won't stand still.
- STAY with a crowd. Try not to be on your own at the times you don't feel safe.
- KNOW and AVOID the 'danger' areas.
- KEEP a record of what is happening.
- DON'T be embarrassed to ask for help. We all need it sometimes.
- TRY to support other victims.
- ASK your parents or carers to contact the school.

**And remember, it is NOT your fault.**