

Ravensthorpe Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Monitor LGB
Staff Lead Head

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Ravensthorpe Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Review: November 2023

OUR ANTI-BULLYING APPROACH

What is bullying?

Bullying is ‘the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or a group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.’ (definition from Anti-Bullying Alliance website 2021. This definition is based on research from across the world over the last 30 years.) With the children, we can talk about STOP – Several Times on Purpose.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling, ‘baiting.’
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online/cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion, ‘baiting.’
- Indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals.

Bullying ‘is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example of grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. (Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE, 2017)

We recognise that where bullying occurs it can have a seriously detrimental effect on the child’s self-esteem, their educational progress and their achievement.

We work hard to ensure that all members of the school community understand what constitutes bullying and that everyone is alert to signs that bullying might be taking place.

We also acknowledge that ‘bullying is often more nuanced than the straightforward binary oppositions of a ‘bully’ and ‘victim’ – bullying is multifaceted, regularly involving groups... often involving vulnerable children who both bully and are bullied.’ (<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/whole-school-and-setting-approach/exclusions-and-bullying>)

Signs and symptoms of bullying

Children may:

- not want to go to school
- be frightened to walk to and from school
- become withdrawn from family and friends
- show a decrease in attainment and/or progress in school work
- change their eating habits; not eating at lunchtimes.

- cry themselves to sleep
- ask for money (may be the victim of extortion).

The school will also be alert to challenging the development of an environment which is hurtful and threatening to particular groups or communities. For example, the use of homophobic, transphobic, sexist or racist language will be challenged, whether or not it is targeted at an individual.

Actions to prevent bullying

We use curriculum opportunities, especially through our PSHE lessons to teach children about bullying.

- the different types of bullying
- the four main elements of bullying (repetitive, intentional, hurtful, imbalance of power)
- the distinction between bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour
- when ‘banter’ becomes bullying
- the role of bystanders
- Protective Behaviours teaching
- What to do if you’re worried that someone is being bullied
- What to do if you are being bullied (who to tell and how to respond)

Every Autumn term, we hold an ‘anti-bullying week’ across the school and use assemblies and in-class learning opportunities to focus on learning about bullying, its effects and the role all of us can play in preventing or responding effectively to it.

We draw on resources from organisations, such as The Anti-bullying Alliance, the NSPCC and Childline.

We also work to prevent bullying from occurring by: closely monitoring children who are known to have previously shown bullying behaviour, ensuring that all children involved in disputes have a fair hearing; encouraging children to play games that don’t involve lots of physical contact and we ensure that all staff are aware of vulnerable children, providing additional support and supervision where necessary.

Responding to bullying

We know that it is important to acknowledge that bullying does happen. We foster a talking culture, where children are encouraged and supported to talk about their worries and where adults will listen to them. We know that in order to stop bullying, any hurtful behaviour must be brought out into the open, discussed and dealt with

Fact-finding: if a child discloses that they, or someone else, is being bullied their class teacher will first speak to the child to try and find out as much as they can and ensure that the child is safe. It is also important that they find out who else is involved and it is rarely a one-on-one behaviour and anyone encouraging the bullying should be identified. If, in their judgement, the class teacher decides that bullying behaviour may be taking place, an initial investigation will be conducted by the teacher. The information from this investigation will be recorded electronically on ScholarPack and reported to a Phase Leader.

Action: where the investigation shows that bullying has taken place, action will be taken by the Class Teacher, supported by the Phase Leader:

- To support the victim
- To put in place educational and protective consequences and support all of the children involved in carrying out the bullying.
- To inform parents/carers of all children involved.
- To repair and restore relationships
- To continue to check-in with the victim.

Once we have ensured that all the children involved are safe, we will discuss with all the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. Sometimes, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each child must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

There are various strategies that can be applied if more than one child is involved in bullying another. Role play and other drama techniques can be used as well as Circle Time. This can be an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour. It can also be used just with the affected group to confront bullying that already exists and help the children to understand how it would feel to be the victim.

Victims will be supported by a member of a pastoral team, or a member of staff they know well, to ensure that they understand that the issue is being taken seriously and that they are not to blame. They will be supported to think about how to recognise and act on worries and that assertive behaviour and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying. Setting up a ‘circle of friends’ or buddy system, possible with children who already hold a position of responsibility in the school, such as School Council, may also be beneficial.

The perpetrator(s), will be informed that bullying is seen as extremely serious and will be given a series of sessions where they will be able to talk to a Phase Leader/Member of SLT to try to better understand the effects of bullying on others. Protective and educational consequences will be issued and a time to reflect, repair and restore will be incorporated into the process.

Sometimes, the perpetrator is playing to an audience to impress and may even be egged on by those present. We will make sure that any witnesses to the incident know that their passive condoning of the incident makes them party to it and, where appropriate, they will also be given protective and educational consequences.

Role of Parents

If parents suspect their child is being bullied or is bullying others, we encourage them to talk to us about it and take all concerns seriously. In the first instance, they should arrange an appointment to meet with their child’s class teacher or a member of our Family Support

Team. Where there is a case of bullying, the parents of the perpetrator and their victims will be informed of any incidents and the action that has taken place. Parents will be asked to support the strategies proposed to tackle the problem.

SECTION 12: STAFF TRAINING

All new members of staff are given a copy of this policy as part of their induction and given guidance by a member of SLT who will support them to understand our approach to managing behaviour and bullying

SECTION 13: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Academy received a report on behaviour, including reported bullying incidents at least termly.

SECTION 14: RELATED POLICIES AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy