Thames View Infants
(Anti-)Bullying Policy

(Anti-)Bullying Policy

Rationale

We recognise that although undesirable, behaviour, which shows little understanding for the feelings of others, is inherent, in all human beings. Children are vulnerable because they are in the process of developing, socially and emotionally. They are learning to understand and cope with their own feelings and emotions as well as trying to understand and respond to those of others. Children are learning to play and negotiate boundaries.

The DfE advises:

> There is no legal definition of bullying.
>
> However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:
> * repeated
> * intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
> * often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation
>
> It takes many forms and can include:
> * physical assault
> * teasing
> * making threats
> * name calling
> * cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)
>
> https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition

We consider that any behaviour that repeatedly causes distress to another and intentionally, hurts, frightens or intimidates can be defined as bullying. Bullying can take place online as well as in person.

Bullying behaviour can take many forms and consequently it can be difficult to identify and even more difficult to address. However, if such behaviour goes unchecked it is likely to have a damaging effect on children's lives. To correct the situation and bring about changes in behaviour children need a great deal of support.

We realise that bullying will occur and that we must create an atmosphere of trust, so that children and parents can report any incidents and know that action will be taken to bring an end to their distress.

Purpose

We aim to:
- Provide a safe, secure learning environment, both in school and in the playground.
- Ensure that children are treated with kindness and respect and are not subjected to any physical abuse, or ridiculed or ignored.
- Create a school in which children can be themselves, knowing that differences of race, colour, religion, appearance, ability, and character are given consideration and respect.
- Ensure that children will be listened to when they are frightened and upset.
- Take action that will protect the victim and ensure their future safety.
- Provide the necessary support and supervision to the bully, to help prevent further incidents of such behaviour.
- Provide children with a supported structure to scaffold them through the process of learning friendship skills and managing peer-relationships: how to agree and negotiate boundaries, reach resolutions and resolve differences with others.

Guidelines

1. Definitions:

Bullying	-	the intention to cause hurt, fear, or intimidation to another person.
Bully	-	the person who is behaving in a manner, which is repeatedly causing distress to another.
Victim	-	the person who is being hurt and damaged by the behaviour of others and is powerless to prevent it.
Cyber-Bullying	-	bullying that occurs within an online context.

Definitions are used for the purpose of this policy, but it is never desirable to label children and they should not be used at any time when dealing with incidents.

2. The process of dealing with such incidents is time consuming and it may be necessary for a class teacher to enlist the help of the Headteacher with this. **The Headteacher should always be made aware of bullying incidents and perceptions of bullying, and that these recorded in the school log.**

3. It is easy to make value judgements about actions that hurt and upset others and to consider an act of physical aggression more serious than, for example, name-calling. **However, when a child or parent tells a member of staff that a child is frightened and hurt, it must always be taken seriously.**

4. Support the victim by ensuring that they feel listened to and assure them that all incidents of bullying are taken seriously. Reassure the victim by setting out strategies to offer support. Check with them regularly to make sure that they are all right.

5. The victim's safety is most important and hasty action that might endanger them, by perhaps inducing the bully to seek revenge, will not help. Neither will action that causes them embarrassment and prevents

them from seeking help in the future.

6. Meet with the bully and describe your reasons for speaking with them. At the same time protect the identity of the victim and any witnesses. Remain calm and non-judgemental in order to ensure that the child feels they have had the opportunity to tell their side of the story.

7. Explain that all incidents of bullying are taken seriously and regardless of the reasons, they are unacceptable

8. Explain to the bully the action that will be taken and that the situation will be monitored.

9. Attempt to help both the victim and the bully to see the situation from another perspective. Help them to see the causes and effects of the incident and identify how the situation might be avoided. However, when bullying takes place the victim should not be made to feel that they are responsible for what is happening to them.

10. Circle time and assembly should be used to help children to understand how others feel and to understand the behaviour expected of them. These settings, as well as ICT lessons, will be used to reinforce important learning about cyber-bullying too.

11. Incidents will be monitored by the Headteacher, who will also monitor the progress of the children.

12. Everyone directly concerned with the children's welfare will be informed.

13. Within School, the culture of carefully empowering children and scaffolding them through a process to negotiate play and boundaries and to resolve disputes, starting as early as Nursery, helps provide children with a set of skills and a supported structure to scaffold them through the process of learning friendship skills and managing peer-relationships. It helps them learn how to agree and negotiate boundaries, reach resolutions and resolve differences with others:

- Key is the premise of children listening to each other and saying to each other "do you realise I don't like that" or "this game is getting too rough". Assemblies model the process of saying sorry effectively and agreeing a way forward.
- Underlying this is the understanding that children then escalate if a resolution cannot be forged, if the other child doesn't reciprocate with this process or if they don't feel able to do so and need extra help. Should this be the case, or in emergency situations, children must know to tell any adult and also know to seek a further adult (should the first not hear/not be able to resolve it to their satisfaction).
- The importance of "telling in the moment", rather than waiting a day or too, is so important when supporting younger children with managing friendships and this message must be continually reinforced by all staff.
- Nevertheless, this very carefully orchestrated system doesn't work in all cases. For some children, a more personalised 'support package' is required for those that need it.