

West Coker CE VC Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is closely linked with our Behaviour Policy, our Safeguarding Policy, our school Code of Conduct and the school's Vision, Aims and Values.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY (INCLUDING CYBER BULLYING AND ANTI-SEXUAL BULLYING)

This policy refers to all forms of bullying - this includes bullying relating to race, religion and culture, homophobic bullying, bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities, sexist and sexual bullying, and the use of cyber technology to bully. **Sanctions under this policy will be as for those in the overall Discipline and Behaviour policy. Transgressions outside of school, where there are clear links to the school, remain subject to school sanctions.**

Definitions of bullying:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually **repeated** over time that **intentionally** hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying is usually physical hurting, name calling, nasty looks or leaving people out.

Bullying usually happens when the relationship is imbalanced.

Bullying is usually on-going.

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'

(Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies, 2011, Department for Education)

Bullying can be:

Verbal - for example name-calling, taunting, mocking,

Physical - for example kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings,

Cyber Bullying - text messaging, prank mobile calls and inappropriate use of social networking site

Emotional - for example excluding people from social groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours

Causing physical or emotional damage to a pupil or group of pupils and can be motivated by prejudice on grounds of race, religion, violent extremism or radicalisation, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, disability and special educational needs or because a child is a looked after child or adopted or is a carer

We are aware that children from ethnic minorities, disabled children and those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

At West Coker School, we believe that every single child has the right to learn in a school environment, free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported. Bullying of any kind is deemed unacceptable and will always be treated seriously and acted upon.

We know that pupils may be bullied in any school or setting, and recognise that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to any cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils.

Bullying can seriously damage a young person's confidence and self-worth; it is the responsibility of **all staff** to actively support children who are being bullied and to act in a **supportive and confidential manner** if a child approaches them with an allegation of bullying.

Bullying is not when children have the odd argument, fall out or engage in a one off tussle.

OUR AIMS

To create an ethos in which attending our school is a positive experience for all members of our community

- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at our school.
- To enable everyone to feel safe while at West Coker Primary School.
- To encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- To deal with each incident of bullying as quickly and as effectively as possible, taking into consideration the needs of all parties and of our community, and, as a result, to reduce the incidents of bullying.
- To support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to.
- To help and support children/young people displaying bullying behaviour to change their attitudes and understand why it needs to change.
- To liaise with parents and other appropriate members of our community.
- To ensure all members of our community feel responsible for helping to reduce bullying.

We are determined to promote and develop a school ethos where bullying behaviour is regarded as unacceptable, to ensure a safe and secure environment is sustained for all pupils.

We aim for all pupils to reach their potential academically, socially and personally through learning and playing in a safe and secure environment.

ADVICE TO PARENTS

We place an extremely high value on our relationship with parents which mean that close communication between Home and School can enable us to deal with difficult situations as they arise. Bullying occurs in all schools and places of work from time to time. Parents should be aware that we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we will always respond to reported incidents.

If your child shows any unusual behaviour or attitude, we would ask that you discuss this with the school immediately. Your first line of contact should be your child's class teacher who will then liaise and discuss the issues / concerns with other members of staff. Please inform the headteacher if you feel your concerns are not being satisfactorily addressed. Similarly, if your child says that they are being bullied or that they know someone who is, we would ask you to let us know swiftly so that we can take immediate / appropriate action.

ADVICE TO PUPILS

If someone is being unkind and making you feel unhappy, you must tell someone. Remember, it may not be bullying but your teachers will help you work through any problems you may have.

1. If you feel you are being bullied you must tell someone about it. This does not have to be class teacher, but someone who you feel comfortable to be able to talk to and who you trust. **Please do not suffer in silence.**
2. Treat everyone in your school with kindness - even if you don't really like them.
3. Don't get involved in name calling or gossip.
4. If you see someone being unkind please tell a teacher or your parents.
5. And remember, if you know that someone is being unkind and you don't do something to help you are letting the bully get away with it.

ADVICE TO STAFF

Always set a good personal example. Be a good role model for the children and be clear that you will not tolerate bullying.

1. Be alert for children who appear upset, **take action immediately.** Look out for those children who are often isolated or the butt of recurrent jokes by their peer groups.

2. **Be on time for lessons** - this can sometimes be a trigger point for low level bullying some areas of the school, such as the playground and cloak rooms, should be monitored very closely for sign of bullying
3. **ALL** staff should always be watchful for any signs of bruising or other marks on children which are not easily accounted for. If you have any concerns then please act immediately and see *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* for guidelines.

If you have a concern, always take some form of action. Always raise issues with the Headteacher. As part of our good practice staff should continue to observe the following objectives;

Being sensitive at all times to the feelings of students and especially to the possibility of bullying Taking seriously a pupil's request for help

Making time for children to speak to us

Respecting a pupil's individuality, views and circumstances

Recognising the need to counsel both the aggressor and the victim

Responding to Bullying

All cases of alleged bullying should be reported to the Headteacher through the procedure above.

In any case of alleged bullying, either the Classteacher, the Headteacher, or a senior member of staff should first establish the facts, and build an accurate picture of events over time, through speaking to the alleged perpetrator(s), victim(s) and adult witnesses, as well as parents and pupil witnesses if necessary and appropriate.

If the allegation of bullying is upheld, the Headteacher (or senior leader) should seek to use a restorative approach with the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) together. The perpetrator(s) should fully understand the consequences of their actions on the victim(s), and apologise without reservation. Both parties should be clear that a repeat of these behaviours will not be acceptable.

All bullying incidents must be recorded. Parents of both parties should be informed.

If the situation does not improve, the Headteacher (or senior leader) should meet with the parent(s) of the bullying child(ren) and agree clear expectations and boundaries which would be shared with the pupils involved. Any further incidents should lead to intervention (e.g. through outside agencies), further monitoring, support and punitive sanctions as deemed necessary. Any necessary action should be taken until the bullying has stopped.

Signs of Bullying

Staff should be vigilant in looking out for signs of bullying or other child protection issues including:

Physical: unexplained bruised, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes, or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches, bedwetting.

Emotional: losing interest in school, withdrawn, secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why unhappy, high level of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, lack of confidence, headaches and stomach aches, signs of depression.

Behavioural: asking to be taken to school, coming home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asks for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties, truancy.

Behaviour Policy

Our Behaviour Policy includes rewards and sanctions which are used consistently, alongside positive relationships, to prevent inappropriate behaviour, and promote positive behaviour.

APPENDIX A

All STAFF

Advice on when reacting to a specific incident:

Before recording an incident it may be useful for staff to consider the following:

- Has the incident with the same person or people occurred several times within a reasonably short period of time?
- Is it a disagreement or the result of play which has got out of hand?
- Is it a 'falling out of friends' matter?
- Are you sure that the child has not had at least partial responsibility for the incident?
- Can you recognise a pattern to the incidents?
- Have you noticed any change in the child's behaviour?

Although incidents may not be bullying, they should always be followed up thoroughly in school and dealt with appropriately with timeliness and sensitivity.

All incidents of bullying (as defined in our policy) will be recorded by the school.

The Head of School will take responsibility for ensuring that the incident is properly recorded and that the record is updated as necessary throughout an investigation.

Parents/carers of all children/young people involved will be informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with.

All discussions and actions relating to the incident/investigation will be documented.

APPENDIX B ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Whenever a bullying incident is discovered, we will go through a number of steps. The exact nature of each step will be adapted to suit the nature and severity of the incident, and the response of those involved.

Before progressing it may be useful for parents/carers to consider the following:-

- Has the incident with the same person or people occurred several times within a reasonably short period of time?
- Is it a disagreement or the result of play which has got out of hand?
- Is it a 'falling out of friends' matter?
- Are you sure your child has not had at least partial responsibility for the incident?
- Can you recognise a pattern to the incidents?
- Have you noticed any change in your child's behaviour?
- (Although incidents may not be bullying they should always be followed up thoroughly in the school and dealt with appropriately.)

When a bullying incident has come to the attention of West Coker Primary School, it will always be taken seriously, investigated and actioned. However, we cannot report back to the parent/carer of any child except their own.

West Coker Primary School will:

- Talk the incident through with all parties involved
- Support the person who has been bullied to express their feelings
- Supporting the person displaying the bullying behaviour to express their feelings
- Explore the use of Restorative Approaches
- Discuss which rule(s) have been broken
- Discuss strategies for making amends

Actions will be in line with our behaviour policy, and may include:

- Explanation why the inappropriate behaviour is unacceptable
- Reparation of damaged relationships
- Restorative Approaches
- Time away from an activity
- Meeting with staff, parent and child
- Missing another activity
- Formal letter home from the Head of School expressing concerns
- Time out from the classroom
- Pastoral support plan
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Review Date November 2019

Next Due November 2022