

PANSHANGER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-bullying Policy

Panshanger Primary School is committed to a policy of inclusion, equality and justice: We provide a warm, caring and safe place for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment.

We believe that bullying of any kind is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. We believe that where bullying is challenged effectively pupils will feel safe and happy and we will demonstrate a school that cares. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

At Panshanger Primary School, we acknowledge that bullying can and does happen from time to time and that bullying can also happen to adults in the workplace. When bullying does occur, everyone should feel able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. All children and young people have the right to be protected from physical, emotional and mental violence; a right enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children also have the right to learn, live, travel and play in a safe environment where they can thrive and achieve their full potential.

Our anti-bullying policy should be read in conjunction with our school's behaviour policy.

What is bullying?

In Panshanger Primary School we define bullying as follows:

*Bullying is when an individual or group **deliberately** hurts another or makes them feel unhappy. Bullying behaviour will be repeated **over a period of time** and is difficult for the victim to defend themselves against. Bullying may be racist, sexist, or homophobic. People can be bullied for any reason; because of the way they look, because of their religion, their age, because of a learning or physical disability for example.*

Whatever the reason, bullying is never acceptable and will not be tolerated in Panshanger Primary School.

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

Physical - hitting, kicking, spitting, demanding money or belongings.

Verbal - name calling, making racist, sexist, homophobic or offensive remarks.

Indirect - excluding or 'blanking', spreading gossip, damaging property, offensive or abusive emails, text messages or posts on social media - known as '**cyber bullying**'. We believe that bullying someone by the use of the internet in anyway is hurtful and will be dealt with in the same manner as for physical and verbal incidents.

What is not bullying?

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP). Children sometimes fall out and say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, although unkind, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns or a childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop skills to repair relationships.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to try to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school community have the responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

Within Panshanger Primary School we want:

- All children to feel safe to learn, play and enjoy the company of others.
- All children and adults to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity.
- All adults to feel happy and safe in the workplace.
- Everyone to listen carefully to what children and adults have to say and treat all accounts with due seriousness.

The school will set about doing this in the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirements for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is and the school's definition of the term.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to reduce opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work and express themselves freely.

Signs and Symptoms of bullying

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these signs and investigate further if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Begins truanting.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to underperform in school work.
- Has possessions go 'missing'.
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully).
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.

NB this is not a definitive list but suggests some of the signs and symptoms.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

We want everybody to feel confident to report bullying whenever and wherever it happens, and get the help they need to feel safe again. All pupils know that if they are experiencing bullying they should tell their teacher / another adult in the first instance.

What can you do if you see someone else being bullied? (the role the bystander)

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair on the victim. Staying silent means that the bully has won and gives them more power. There are ways a pupil can help without putting themselves in danger, for example telling a member of staff or other trusted adult as soon as possible.

Strategies in school for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing opportunities for bullying to occur.

These include:

- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules.
- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year.
- Raising awareness through assemblies, work in PSHE lessons and circle time discussions.
- Setting up circle of 'friends' network to support individuals experiencing difficulties.
- Using drama and role-play activities to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations.
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives, e.g. sports leaders.
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour.
- Involving parents and the wider community.
- Multi agency work - working with social services, police etc.

Procedures for reporting and dealing with bullying incidents

At Panshanger Primary School all staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying. They will be taken seriously and be dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all those involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step by step procedures will be followed in all cases:

- Initially, staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour and advice will be given to help the victim.
- Parents of the children involved will be informed.
- Staff will reinforce to the bully/ies that their behaviour is unacceptable and they will be given a warning. The bully/ies will be asked to genuinely apologise for what they have done.
- Work will be done with the bully/ies (for example in circle times) to help them understand and change their behaviour including investigating the underlying reasons as to why they are bullying.
- In serious cases e.g. when threatening behaviour is involved, parents will be informed and invited into the school to discuss the problem. This meeting will be with the class teacher and/or Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher present.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Should the bullying continue the Head teacher (in her absence the Deputy Head) may make to decision to exclude the child. The parents then have the right to appeal to the Governing Body and the LEA.
- Appropriate records will be kept of all incidents.

Reviewed by Govs. February 2021

