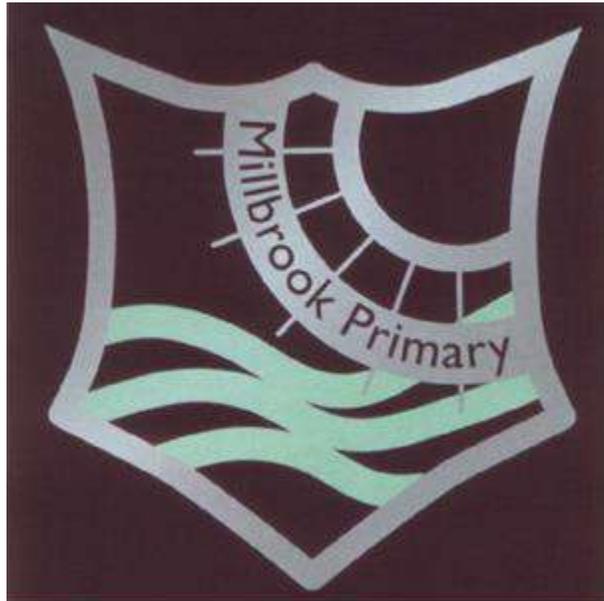


# Millbrook Primary School



## Anti-Bullying Policy

### ***The right to feel safe.***

*All children have a right to feel safe and protected in school. All adults in the school community have an obligation to support this principle, and all children should be encouraged to share in the responsibility for the safety and well-being of each other.*

Date policy reviewed: September 2017

Policy review period: 1 Year

Date of next review: September 2018

## What is bullying?

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, eg 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 (eg email, social networks and instant messenger)

*'Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt or threaten or frighten someone else. To do this, the bully has to have some sort of power over the victim, a power not always recognisable to the teacher.'*

**In July 2017, the DfE published the following:**

**“Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood,”**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

## What is 'not bullying?'

*'Bullying is not when children fall out, or don't get on.'*

Bullying happens in schools, colleges, nurseries, in the workplace and in the home.

Bullying can be carried out by individuals or by groups. The characteristics of bullying are that:

- It is deliberately hurtful
- It is repeated over time
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
- It is usually hidden from adults or authority figures

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Teasing
- Name calling
- Spreading rumours
- Exclusion from the group
- Threats, including threatening looks
- Extortion
- Damage to belongings
- Physical assault
- Racial harassment
- Sexual harassment
- Homophobic and trans-gender harassment

This may be done in face-to-face contact or by means of technology such as texts, phone messages, video messages or a wide range of social media applications which are commonly available.

Homophobic bullying does not only affect lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) young people. Anyone who is perceived as **different** can become a target of homophobic bullying. Like any other form of bullying, homophobic bullying can be distressing for a child and can affect their confidence and well-being. An important aspect of our role is making sure every child - regardless of their sexual orientation – has someone to turn to if they are being bullied and that they feel included and valued – at home and at school. Parents of the victim and perpetrator will be informed immediately and should the matter persist, the child could face further sanctions. Explicit teaching of why this behaviour is unacceptable will be shared with the child and parents.

The effects of bullying on pupils and their families can be profound and long lasting. Potential outcomes of bullying are known to include: -

- Unhappiness
- Loss of confidence and self – esteem
- Poor school attendance and low achievement
- Feeling let down by adults
- Fear and self-blame

***Bullying is classed as unacceptable behaviour at Millbrook. It is targeted in several ways:***

- ✓ Through PSHE lessons in the curriculum
- ✓ Through whole school / class assemblies and discussions
- ✓ Through special events – Bullying Awareness day; raising funds for Childline etc.
- ✓ Careful supervision of children both in and out of class
- ✓ Dealing with any incidents according to school procedures

### **School Procedures**

All incidents reported are dealt with in school by a range of staff. On a day-to-day basis this is most often the Learning Mentors, Mrs Lowe and Mrs Cowlan, or a member of the leadership team.

### **Investigating the incident**

Generally, the alleged bully and victim will be interviewed separately. Any witnesses or 'supporters' will also be interviewed in an attempt to establish the facts. Inevitably, there will be some occasions when it will be very unclear as to what actually happened. In these circumstances, the priority will be given to ensuring that no further incidents take place. Relevant staff, including teaching staff, Pastoral Support Staff and Lunchtime Supervisors will be informed in order that the situation may be monitored closely. Priority is given to protecting the victim.

### **Dealing with the incident**

#### **The Victim**

Victims of bullying incidents will be invited to talk through their experiences, and will be monitored for two weeks after the incident, when a member of staff will meet with them each day to ensure there are no further problems. Further support measures will be implemented as appropriate. Priority is given to the feelings of victims, and no action will be taken without discussion with them first. At times, it will be appropriate for the bully to apologise personally. In other circumstances, a different strategy will be applied.

## **The Bully**

Where an incident of bullying has been established, the bully will be required to make amends in some way. Consideration will be given to contacting parents, and if necessary, establishing a Behaviour Support Plan. A record of the incident will remain in the 'cause for concern' book.

***Each case must be treated as the unique incident it is.***

The school has a number of strategies to deal with incidents, and an appropriate method will be selected depending among other factors on:

- The age of the children involved
- The severity of the incident
- Any previous history

### **Strategies for dealing with bullying**

- Counselling by staff or peers
- Mentoring
- Mediation
- Appropriate range of sanctions applied – leading ultimately to exclusion from school if the problem persists

### **Parents**

We recognise that bullying can be an upsetting and emotional experience. The school undertakes to deal with incidents as sensitively and speedily as possible.

Where parents approach the school with concerns about bullying, the incident will be investigated, and the findings reported back as soon as possible.

We would ask that parents inform school if they suspect their child is being bullied. Sometimes the child will not want this to happen. Experience shows that a situation will rarely get better if ignored. If in doubt, please telephone the school to speak to the class teacher or the Headteacher in confidence to discuss your concerns. Staff are then able to monitor the situation sensitively.

***Possible signs of bullying to look out for include: -***

- Reluctance to attend school
- Asking to be accompanied to school or changing route
- Mysterious headaches or stomach aches
- Becoming withdrawn
- 'Losing' dinner money
- 'Losing' possessions
- Damaged possessions

- Hitting out at others or becoming aggressive
- Nightmares or sleeplessness
- Bed-wetting
- Unexplained bruises
- Refusing to talk about any of these problems
- Giving unlikely reasons for any of these problems

Sometimes an incident starts out of school only to be carried over in school time. Equally a problem which develops in school might escalate into trouble out of school. Incidents like these can take a great deal of time to sort out. Again, experience has shown that where school is involved, it will be easier to sort out a problem by approaching school first.

### **Conclusion**

Bullying is found in all walks of life. It is an issue that will not diminish by being ignored. Ultimately, bullying is learned behaviour and can be unlearned too. This is why the school approaches the issue on several fronts:

- ✓ We investigate fairly but thoroughly
- ✓ We look at issues involved in bullying in lessons and assemblies
- ✓ We aim to give children the confidence to tell if they have problems
- ✓ We try to involve parents

It is worth bearing in mind that: -

- It is possible to counter bullying effectively
- Bullies need help and support to change their behaviour
- The bullied need a balance between protection and empowerment

It is the aim of our approach to bullying at Millbrook that we work towards achieving all three of the above statements.

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### **Useful contacts in school**

Headteacher and Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator  
 Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)  
 SENDCo and DSL  
 Learning Mentors and DSLs

Mr M Lightwood  
 Mrs K Parkes  
 Mrs J Edwards  
 Mrs T Lowe  
 Mrs G Cowlan

All can be contacted via the school on 01952 387640.

You are welcome to talk to your child's class teacher or any of the above. Please ask for an appointment.