

Anti-Bullying Policy

Aim

To provide a welcoming, safe and tolerant environment that is free from bullying for all children who attend our setting.

To ensure:

- All management committee members, playwork staff, volunteers, children and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All management committee members, Playwork staff and volunteers are pro-active in preventing bullying and creating a culture that values difference.
- All management committee members, playwork staff and volunteers know what the setting policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All children and parents know what the setting policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- We take bullying seriously and children and parents are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Information

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our setting. If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

What Is Bullying?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as the **repetitive, intentional hurting** of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.

The 4 key areas of bullying are; it is hurtful, it is repetitive, it is intentional and it involves a power imbalance.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding toys and equipment, threatening gestures).
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, phone threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e., camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. We need to support children who are bullying to learn different ways of behaving and support children who are being bullied to stop it happening now and in the future.

Children who have experienced bullying are more likely to have impaired wellbeing, to self-harm and experience depression, to retaliate, and to face challenges at school including being excluded, missing days and barriers to learning. In the long term, as adults, they are more likely to not be in a stable relationship, experience mental health issues, perpetrate or be a victim of domestic violence.

Bullying as a Group Behaviour

When bullying happens, children take on a variety of roles- these can be fluid and change from incident to incident:

- The Ringleader (bully) initiating and leading the bullying but not always the person 'doing' the bullying.
- The Target the person at whom the bullying is aimed.
- The Reinforcer(s) supports the bullying, might laugh or encourage other people to collude with what is going on.
- The Assistant(s) actively involved in 'doing' the bullying.
- The Defender(s) stands up for someone being bullied. Knows that bullying is wrong and feels confident enough to do something about it and this may involve talking to an adult.
- The Outsider(s) ignores any bullying and does not want to get involved.

Bullying can be a way of gaining status and power, so changing the behaviour of the group can limit these perceived rewards and reduce the bullying behaviour. When exploring bullying incidents, we will ask ourselves about these roles. We recognise that the risk of bullying is often prevented by increasing the number of defenders of bullying.

Groups Who Experience Bullying More Than Others

Disabled children/those with SEN.

Young carers.

Looked after children.

Children who are or are perceived as LGBT.
Children from certain races or faiths.

Signs and Symptoms

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

- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- reluctance to attend the setting
- request to be picked up from the setting early
- has few, if any friends, with whom he or she spends time with
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

What Children Say They Want:

- To be believed when they tell an adult they are being bullied.
- To be involved in the solution – children are often anxious that parents or staff will rush to punish the bully or bullies and that this will cause further bullying.
- For the bullying to stop – this is more important than who is right or wrong.
- For staff to educate children about why bullying hurts.

Policy

- A shared definition of bullying will be displayed in the setting and known by all staff, children and parents.

- A variety of reporting methods that account for communication needs and allow children to feel safe and secure will be provided. For example, a communication box that children can leave a note in and request a chat.
- Staff will focus on promoting positive behaviour as outlined in the setting's Behaviour Management policy.
- Staff will use methods to prevent bullying in the setting. These will include, as appropriate, reviewing the playscheme rules regularly, signing a behaviour contract, writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying, reading stories about bullying or making up role-plays, learning about people's differences, discussing the roles that children play in bullying and having safe strategies on how to support a person who is being bullied.
- Staff will foster a culture that values and respects difference by role modelling that behaviour themselves, challenging any behaviour (words or acts) that are inappropriate or discriminatory, and pro-actively providing opportunities for children to learn about difference e.g. through the provision of books that offer positive views of race, LGBTQ, disability and gender, through celebrating the positive impacts of those areas on children etc.
- We will ensure that children understand that it is their right to feel safe and secure in their environment.
- Staff will discuss the issues surrounding bullying openly with children. This will include the effects and consequences of bullying behaviour.
- Staff will be encouraged to access necessary training.
- Staff will follow the subsequent procedure for dealing with bullying behaviour.
- Staff will support both the child/ren being bullied and the child/ren showing bullying behaviour.
- Staff will liaise with other agencies involved with the child/ren.
- We will consult regularly with children to measure levels of bullying behaviour and ascertain how safe children feel in our setting and whether there is further action we can take. This might be in the form of a questionnaire.
- We will review the anti-bullying policy and ensure the whole setting has input and an opportunity to offer their perspective. We will amend the existing policy taking the feedback into account and ensure that all staff and children are fully involved in the implementation, operation, monitoring and evaluation of the policy.

Procedures

Step 1: Safety

- Ensure the safety of those involved.
- All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively.
- Children will be encouraged to immediately report any bullying they see.
- Children will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously.
- Staff will talk to the child who has been subjected to bullying. Staff will be aware that the child may be angry and could display physical or verbal aggression. Staff will help and support them and check regularly on their welfare.

Step 2: Preventing Reoccurrence

- Staff will talk to the child who has shown bullying behaviour. The child will be encouraged to discuss the situation and to think about the consequences of their behaviour.
- Staff will agree a plan of action for each child or together.
- If appropriate, both children will be supported to meet and to talk through the incident.
- Staff will inform parents/ carers of all children involved and organise a meeting between relevant parents/ carers as appropriate.

Step 3: Whole Setting Learning

- All incidents will be reported to the Manager and recorded on an Incident Form.
- Staff will refer to the Behaviour Management Policy if the situation persists.
- Staff will monitor the situation and review and evaluate incidents.

Cyber Bullying

We recognise that cyber-bullying may need to be addressed in a different way because the bullying is likely to also be happening outside of the setting. We will follow appropriate parts of our procedure and also discuss with the child/parents the following recommendations;

- Screenshot any offensive or harassing messages.
- Make sure your privacy settings are set so only people you know and trust can see what you post.
- Avoid further communication with or retaliation to those sending the messages.
- Report the incident(s) to internet service providers' websites and/or social media sites.
- Adhering to age restrictions on social media.

Useful Organisations

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
Youth Access	020 8772 9900

KIDSCAPE: www.kidscape.org.uk/

Kidscape has a parent advice line and email contact, as well as resources on dealing with bullying (including cyber bullying) for parents and young people.

Parents Helpline

Monday – Friday, 9am – 9 pm

Sat and Sunday, 10am – 3pm

0808 800 2222

Bullying Online: www.bullying.co.uk

A parent's helpline for information, advice, guidance and support on any aspect of parenting and family life, including bullying.

No Bullying! www.4children.org.uk

Resource book is available from 4children. 02075122100

The Anti- Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

A range of information and resources, including on cyber bullying and bullying of SEND children.

Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals/resources/

Resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers around cyber bullying and keeping safe online.

Changing faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk/adviceandsupport/children-and-families

Supports children who have a condition or injury that affects their appearance, and their families