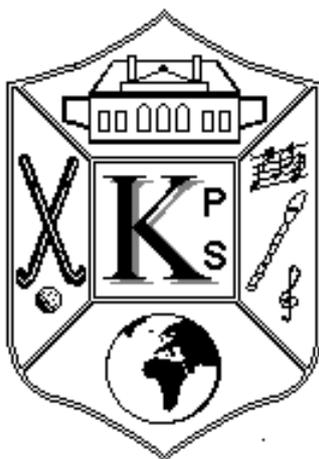


KIRKINRIOLA PRIMARY SCHOOL



Anti-Bullying Policy

**Reviewed January 2016
Approved by Board of Governors on 12th January 2016**

Kirkinriola Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying in any form is regarded as an unacceptable behaviour and is not tolerated in our school.

Children are encouraged to report all incidents to an adult and will be listened to sympathetically.

If bullying behaviour does happen, then

- it will be treated seriously
- it will be tackled as soon as possible
- incidents will be recorded
- both the victim and the person demonstrating bullying behaviour will be supported

Definition of bullying behaviour

"Bullying: All children make friends, break friends, say horrible things to each other, are spiteful, tease and jostle for places in the pecking order of school and family. Bullying is something beyond that."

Keith Sullivan: The Anti-Bullying Handbook: 2001

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

- deliberately hurtful
- repeated over a period of time
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Examples of bullying behaviour

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

- physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours

Consequences of bullying

Bullying affects everyone, not just bullies and victims. It affects children who may witness violence and aggression and the distress of the victim. It may damage the atmosphere of a class and even the climate of a school. Less aggressive children can be drawn into the taunting and tormenting of victims by group pressure and psychological pressures.

Victims may be reluctant to attend school and are often absent. They may be more anxious and insecure than others, having fewer friends and often feeling unhappy and lonely. Victims can suffer from low self-esteem and negative self-image, looking upon themselves as failures - feeling stupid, ashamed and unattractive.

Being bullied affects people both physically and mentally. Symptoms include fits, faints, vomiting, limb pains, paralysis, hyperventilation, visual symptoms, headaches, stomach aches, bed-wetting, sleeping difficulties and sadness. Being bullied may lead to depression or, in the most serious cases, attempted suicide. It may lead to anxiety, depression, loneliness and lack of trust in adult life.

Victims of bullying

Any child can be bullied, and although none of these characteristics can excuse it, certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- lacking close friends in school
- being shy
- an over-protective family environment
- being from a different racial or ethnic group from the majority
- being different in some obvious respect - such as stammering
- having Special Educational Needs or a disability
- behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a 'nuisance'
- possessing expensive accessories

Some victims may behave passively or submissively, signalling to others that they would not retaliate if attacked or insulted. Others may behave aggressively, sometimes provoking others to retaliate. Some pupils are both bullies and victims; approximately 20% of victims also act as bullies although tending not to direct their aggression towards their own aggressors.

Why does bullying happen?

Some children may become temporary bullies after a traumatic event, such as a divorce, the birth of a new baby, the death of a loved one or because of boredom and frustration.

Other children become chronic bullies because they

- like the feeling of power
- are spoilt and expect everyone to do what they say
- feel insecure, inadequate, humiliated
- have been abused in some way
- are scapegoats or bullied at home
- are under pressure to succeed at all costs
- don't fit in with other children
- feel no sense of accomplishment
- are not allowed to show their feelings

Bullies appear very powerful. They may even make it seem like the bullying is the victim's fault.

Possible signs of bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied.

Children may:

- be frightened of walking to or from school
- be unwilling to go to school
- beg to be driven to school
- change their route to school
- begin doing poorly in their school work
- come home regularly with clothes or books damaged
- come home hungry because packed lunch was taken
- become withdrawn, start stammering
- become distressed, stop eating
- cry themselves to sleep
- have nightmares and even call out 'leave me alone'
- have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- have their possessions 'go missing'
- ask for money, or begin stealing money (to pay the bully)
- continually 'lose' their pocket money
- refuse to say what's wrong
- give improbable excuses to explain any of the above

Bullying by race, gender, sexual orientation or disability

In bullying involving race, gender or sexual orientation a child is targeted for representing a group, and attacking the individual sends a message to that group.

These types of bullying are therefore likely to hurt not only the victim, but also other pupils from the same group and their families. Incidents can include:

- verbal abuse by name calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- sharing images or words that discriminate against one particular group.
- inciting others to discriminate.
- written insults -against food, music, dress or customs
- refusing to co-operate in work or in play

Pupils with Special Educational Needs or disabilities may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other children. However, it is important to be mindful that they are often at greater risk of being bullied.

Monitoring incidents

Bullying often continues just because the victim is afraid to tell anyone.

The victim may be afraid of

- making the bullying worse
- being hurt more both physically and emotionally.
- not being believed
- being seen as a 'trouble maker'
- of being blamed for provoking it.
- getting the bully into trouble, of parents getting angry
- ostracised by other children.

Some children may not

- recognise that the behaviour is bullying
- realise that they have the right to tell someone about it
- know how to say what has happened or where to go for help.

They may hope that the behaviour will go away or that the bully will find another target.

It is therefore important that staff and parents take steps to uncover bullying and that all claims of bullying are taken seriously.

Responding to incidents

Incidents involving bullying behaviour must be dealt with promptly and should be recorded. Children need to feel that someone is listening to their version of what is going on. Changing the behaviour of the bully takes longer.

The action to be taken will depend on the severity and frequency of incidents, the feelings of the children involved and the impact on the class/school. It is important that claims of bullying are taken seriously as a half-hearted response might make the problem worse.

Positive steps

Through assemblies and classroom work, through our response to incidents and through the examples we set, we aim to ensure that all children at KPS are aware that bullying is not tolerated in our school.

The curriculum can be used to:

- raise awareness about bullying and the anti-bullying policy
- increase understanding for victims, and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- teach pupils how constructively to manage their relationships with others
- explore issues about bullying

In the playground we provide effective levels of supervision that can cover all areas. Supervisory assistants are encouraged to be positive, consistent and are made fully aware of the procedures for responding to bullying. The playground environment promotes positive interaction with areas for team sports, playground games and quieter activities all being zoned. We also have a buddy system that enables pupils to access support from our P7 pupils.

Strategies for working with incidents of bullying

Five key points:

- never ignore suspected bullying
- don't make premature assumptions
- listen carefully to all accounts
- adopt a problem-solving approach
- follow up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed

Procedures for reporting incidents of bullying

At KPS we promote an open door policy and encourage supervisory staff, parents and children to report any concerns immediately to the class teacher. However, when reporting bullying please ask to speak with the class teacher in private, so that notes can be made.

1. Listen carefully to the account.
2. If appropriate make some personal notes.
3. Report your concerns to a class teacher only.
4. Allow time for the school to implement the procedures below.

Procedures for responding to incidents of bullying

1. Discuss the incident with the child who is reported as being bullied.
2. Make a record.
3. Inform the Designated Child Protection Teacher.
4. Class teacher to follow up the incident with the all children involved as appropriate.
5. Records of observations and conversations should be kept.
6. Parents of children directly involved will be informed when appropriate.