



Anti-bullying policy

We, The Gorse Ride Schools, believe that our children and all members of our school community have the right to come to school and feel happy, respected and valued within a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims.

We believe bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up. It is wrong and will not be tolerated in our school. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms but the four main forms are:

1. PHYSICAL

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.

2. VERBAL

Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc. This may include deliberately goading vulnerable children towards poor behaviour choices.

3. EXCLUSION

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.

4. DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT

Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hand over property to them.

Our Aims

We aim to provide a happy and secure environment for all those who work in it.

We aim to make everyone who forms part of the school community – children, staff, parents and governors – involved in the success of this policy. We must all work towards maintaining high levels of security and self-esteem for both children and adults.

We have a responsibility to develop an environment in which all members of our school community are encouraged to:

- Treat everyone with kindness and respect
- Act with thought and consideration for others
- Behave courteously, being polite and helpful at all times
- Be friendly and cooperative
- Be honest and truthful
- Treat property with respect

We also have a responsibility to take steps to discourage any member of our school community from:

- Making unkind or offensive comments
- Behaving in a racist, sexist or homophobic manner



- Using foul or unacceptable language
- Being rude or aggressive
- Using physical aggression
- Damaging property

Occasionally, there may be incidents where pupils are accidentally hurt or impacted by another pupil's behaviour due to their having more complex needs. These incidents are not classified as bullying and are dealt with individually in a manner that is in accordance with the pupil's intervention plan which will have been carefully developed with the support of external professionals. Children who are subject to accidental harm in this manner will be supported and cared for and parents kept informed.

Scope

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises. The School is not legally responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere. However, the school has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its pupils and will respond positively to any information it receives about bullying outside the schools. Therefore:

- If it emerges that a pupil is responsible for bullying other children outside the schools then this matter will be addressed and (if appropriate) the bully's parents informed.
- If a child is found to be the victim of bullying outside school then help and support will be offered and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The victim's parents will be informed.
- If there are more general concerns about children's safety outside the schools then the local police will be contacted and their help sought in making the area around the school premises more secure. If concerns arise in relation to school transport then the issue will be raised with the transport companies and their help sought in dealing with the problem.
- If information is received that a child is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents. If concerns persist advice will be sought from a support agency with parental permission. If this is unsuccessful the issue will then be referred to Social Care. (See Child Protection Procedures).
- If children are being bullied by pupils of another school the Head of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

Whilst Gorse Ride Schools have no legal responsibility for the behaviour of parents, we would ask that parents engage with supporting the anti-bullying policy by ensuring that they do not engage in 'shaming' of individual children, either by discussing their actions in public places or online or by ostracising them as this could constitute bullying behaviour towards both the child and their parent/carer.

How we identify possible bullying incidents

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
- All staff listen, investigate, and act on reported incidents.
- Incidents in the behaviour copy books are monitored for repeated offences towards individuals or particular groups.
- Playground leaders are trained and supervised by members of staff to be available to children experiencing difficulty.
- It is clear to children that there are opportunities each day for them to talk on a one to one basis with an adult.
- Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with the school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with the



school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

- Similarly if parents believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying child helped to change their behaviour.

How we deal with a child bullying

The following is an agreed procedure that both staff and children will follow in the event of suspected bullying. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening and non-confrontational approach – bullies are often targets too.

- The child reports the bullying to an adult.
- We investigate – discussing with the victim and the bully separately initially, and then together if appropriate.
- We listen to the details about the situation/incident using restorative approaches.
- We make it clear that bullying is not acceptable behaviour.
- We talk/listen to any other witnesses.
- At this point, the matter will either be resolved or pursued further if bullying is confirmed.
- If bullying is confirmed, the class teacher, Deputy and Headteacher will be informed. They will discuss the incident with all concerned and make every effort to inform parents/carers of all children involved that the child/children have been involved in bullying.

At this stage sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, or in extreme cases, a period of exclusion.

- All children will be asked what they 'need' to make the situation better.
- A referral may be made for the bully or the bullied child to our Emotional Learning Support Assistant.
- We examine the facts and decide if a Restorative Conference should be held.
- We continue to monitor the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with the victim, to ensure there is no repetition. Any further incidents with the same children are documented.
- We work to improve the behaviour of the bully. Favoured activities are gradually reinstated and the child will be praised for good, positive behaviour. This will rebuild self-esteem which may be low.

What we do to prevent bullying

- There is a whole-school anti-bullying ethos to which both staff and children are genuinely committed and which is communicated in assemblies and in the classroom via circle times and PSHE lessons.
- Everyone knows and understands what bullying is and why bullies bully.
- All children are taught to be assertive.
- All children are taught how to spot bullying and report it.
- Incidents of bullying are nipped in the bud.
- Any child who has bullied is called to account in a firm, but kind, supportive manner using restorative approaches and subsequently supervised and supported in learning more appropriate ways of interacting with other children.
- We offer intervention strategies such as Restorative Conferences or individual work with children.
- All children are empowered to help both the bullied child and the bully.



What we do through the curriculum

This policy is supported through the curriculum in a number of ways:

- Children are taught how to keep themselves safe as part of their Personal, Social and Health Education.
- Our diverse curriculum helps children to identify feelings and teaches them about the social and emotional aspects of learning.
- Our Emotional Learning Support Assistant works 1:1 with children referred to her to address any issues around social skills, low self-esteem etc.
- Our Junior Restorative Champions course trains children in the skills of building friendship and also managing and resolving conflict.

All of these preventative strategies operate within the schools' ethos founded on equality, fairness and respect for others in which individual differences are celebrated and seen as a source of enrichment. In order to help children learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff will at all times treat each other (as well as children and parents/carers) with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

Monitoring and Evaluating

Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded. Any incidents with a racist, sexist, prejudice against disability or homophobic element will be identified. An annual report will be made to the Governing Body indicating the extent of the problem and any trends which may emerge. Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any on-going concerns.

This policy will be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body and the SLT at least every three years or more frequently if required.