



# **Daubeney Middle School**

## **Anti Bullying Policy and Guidelines**

UPDATED SEPT 09 – BEING REVIEWED AT FORUM ON 16<sup>TH</sup>  
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SCHOOL COUNCIL ON 16-12-09

This policy should be read in conjunction with Bedfordshire L.A.'s policy on Bullying. Both of these policies have been adopted by Daubeney School Governors.

### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt or threaten or frighten someone else. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological and is always an act of aggression. It can include name calling, malicious gossip, coercing the victim into acts which he/she does not wish to do, threats, social ostracism, damage to the victim's property and many other threats and acts of aggression.

Any behaviour, which is the illegitimate use of power in order to hurt others, is bullying behaviour.

**We must be seen to take action against bullying – secrecy, silence and covering up nurture bullying. Admitting the possibility of bullying in the school is the first step to making sure that the school is safe. Open discussion and an active, practical policy will do a great deal more to tackle bullying.**

### **Recognising Bullies**

Bullies come from all types of home backgrounds; from all races; from all cultures and from both sexes. They can be found in all age groups including adult age groups. Any attempt to give guidelines to recognising bullies must be seen in the context of that first sentence. It is easy to think of stereotypes, but that may cloud our vision and lead us to dismiss bullying behaviour as bossiness, leadership or natural competition.

The following statements may be of help in some cases:

- Bullying can take several; forms, it can be physical, mental or verbal.
- Some bullies appear not to appreciate the real effect their bullying has.
- Some bullies express little or no remorse.
- Some justify their actions by describing their victims as having deserved the Treatment handed out to them.
- Some bullies are, or have been, victims themselves.

### **Bullying Gangs**

Some bullies operate in gangs or groups. The group unity may depend upon active participation in various forms of bullying. The group may or may not be lead by one or two stronger members. These bullying gangs can be very difficult to deal with, especially as ideas of personal responsibility may fade away in a group. Particular care must be taken in dealing with bully gangs because their activities may continue off the school premises even after action has been taken in school. Many bully gangs originate in the community during non-school time, but their influence may be brought into school. Children may find it difficult to leave a bully gang.

## **Recognising Victims**

Here, too, we need to be aware of stereotypes. However, certain characteristics are a little easier to recognise. **Bullies pick on vulnerable children.** Some children are temporarily vulnerable because of a particular circumstance; others are vulnerable for a longer period of time. Sometimes, the victim is simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

**It is far too easy to blame the victim and tell them to ‘toughen up’. Such children need help to become more assertive and strategies to enable them to deal with difficult situations.**

**Vulnerability isn’t always visible to adults. The victim may seem exactly like any other child. He or she may also be anxious to cover up the fact that they are being bullied.**

Victims may be pupils who:

- Are new to the class or school.
- Are different in appearance, speech or background from other pupils.
- Are not well integrated into the class.
- Suffer from low self-esteem (but this might be a cause or effect of bullying).
- Demonstrate ‘entertaining’ reactions when bullied, e.g. tantrums, loss of control etc.
- Are more nervous or anxious than usual.
- Are having difficulties with schoolwork.

The following are typical signs of behavioural patterns, which may indicate that a child is being bullied – they may also indicate other kinds of distress, even abuse.

Children may:

- Be frightened of walking to or from school.
- Be unwilling to go to school and make continual excuses to avoid going.
- Beg to be driven to school.
- Change their route to school every day.
- Begin doing poorly in their schoolwork.
- Regularly have clothes or books or schoolwork torn or destroyed.
- Come home starving (because dinner money was taken).
- Become withdrawn.
- Start stammering.
- Start hitting other children (as a reaction to being bullied).
- Stop eating or become obsessively clean (as a reaction to being called ‘fatty’ or ‘dirty’).
- Develop stomach aches or headaches due to stress.
- Cry themselves to sleep.
- Begin wetting the bed.
- Have nightmares.
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches or cuts.
- Have their possessions ‘go missing’.
- Ask for money or begin stealing (to pay the bully).
- Continually ‘lose’ their pocket money.
- Refuse to say what’s wrong.
- Give impossible excuses to explain any the above.

**The bullied child often feels isolated, lonely and powerless.**

### **Doing something about bullying**

#### **Action Plan for Heads of Year**

People who you may need to involve:

Form Teacher.

Deputy Headteacher.

Joint Headteacher.

Parents of the bully and/or the victim.

Whole school staff (at a briefing).

The allegation must be investigated fully by using the following steps:

- Take notes of the incident and be clear of the facts.
- Follow this through by interviewing all pupils involved.
- Get written witness statements where possible.
- Act on the information gained – talk to the bully/bullies about their actions and the subsequent effects of their actions.
- Make it plain to the bully that you disapprove. Be careful of your own manner, an aggressive manner may indicate that bullying is all right.
- Encourage the bully/bullies to see the victims point of view.
- Agree a plan of action, give the bully clear guidance and tell him/her what you expect to see.
- Get back to the victim and inform him/her of the actions taken. Give the victim guidelines and strategies for dealing with the situation. Arrange regular meetings with the victim to review progress. Tell the victim that they **must** tell an adult if the bullying continues. Assure the victim that they are not alone. Monitor the situation carefully.

### **The Bully**

After the decision about a relevant punishment has been taken, in line with school policy, consideration must be given to longer-term prevention of this behaviour. If the bullying behaviour is serious or long term, the child needs to be involved in a monitoring arrangement. It is suggested that the Form Tutor, Head of Year and the Parents should meet and agree a strategy for monitoring the child's behaviour and discussing it with him/her. Some of the strategies below may also be of use.

## **Strategies**

(Prevention of bullying, helping the bully and the victim)

### **Form time and P.S.H.E.**

We need to create a positive environment in which there is a caring group identity where peer group disapproval is one of the strongest disincentives for any form of anti-social behaviour. If there is a negative reaction from the rest of the class, the bully might find him/herself exactly where they don't want to be – on the outside of the group.

Discussing the reasons for bullying (not in a personal way) will help engender understanding and care. Discussing a hypothetical case of bullying and what the bully and other children ought to do will indicate to any bullies precisely what the rest of the children think and could do in such a situation. Acting it out could give bullies insight into their actions and suggest to victims how they might avoid bullies or deal with them more assertively. Victims and onlookers might then feel more able to intervene or tell an adult. Children should be encouraged not to accept any kind of 'bullying' behaviour, whether it is directed towards themselves or others.

- Form/Year assemblies might also be used to support work done in form time and P.S.H. E.
- There are theatre companies who visit schools and use drama workshops to Support this theme.
- The Police may also include this in their programme of visits and assemblies.
- The School Nurse offers a weekly support session to any pupil who wishes to see her.

### **No Blame Strategy**

This can be very effective in suitable cases, usually when the bully is of a taunting or teasing nature and the victim's self-esteem is suffering. The strategy should be explained to the victim and agreement reached before the process begins.

**Stage 1:** The victim draws up a list of six people (usually in his/her own form) to include the bully, the victim's friends and some neutral but respected class mates.

**Stage 2:** The teacher organises a meeting with the chosen six (the victim is not present for this) and explains that help is needed with a problem. It is very important that the bully is not picked out in any way. The teacher explains that 'x' is very unhappy and asks for concrete examples of how the individuals in the group could help. The children in turn should volunteer help, such as: 'I could walk home with him', 'I could talk to him first thing in the mornings', 'I could help him with his Maths'. The teacher should make sure that each child has a definite aim; thank them for their help; organise a meeting for the following week.

**Stage 3:** The teacher can reassure the victim privately that all went well. The teacher should monitor the situation all week.

**Stage 4:** During the second meeting, the teacher should ask each one if the promises were kept. They should be thanked; told that 'x' is much happier now; asked to continue their support.

**Stage 5:** The victim should continue to be monitored.

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### **Recording**

All incidents should be recorded and kept in the child's yellow file:

**Yellow Cards:** For recording incidents which involved contact with parents. These will need to be completed for each child involved.

**White Slips:** For minor/isolated incidents which did not involve contacting either set of parents.

### **Monitoring Bullying Incidents**

Each Head of Year will monitor bullying incidents within their year. There will be an agenda item at each Heads of Year Meeting where bullying may be discussed.

### **Monitoring & Reviewing the Policy**

The policy will be reviewed annually by a working party of staff.  
The Policy will also be reviewed by the Governors.