

Howard Primary School

Anti Bullying Policy

Definition

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. Bullying can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical intimidation, assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident that casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.'

Staff, parents and children at Howard Primary School (PS) will work together to create a happy, caring and safe learning environment. Bullying, whether verbal, physical or indirect, is not tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to try to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

At Howard PS we follow the Unicef Rights Respecting way and children are continually reminded that they have rights and responsibilities and that being treated fairly and feeling safe are a fundamental right for all.

Bullying may be brought to the attention of any member of staff by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

Aims

- ◆ To provide a safe, caring environment for the whole school community, especially the children in our care where all pupils and adults follow the Unicef Rights and Responsibilities agenda.
- ◆ To instil in children that bullying is unacceptable and that reports of bullying will be taken seriously, recorded and acted upon.
- ◆ To reassure children that they will be listened to and will know that it is all right to tell.
- ◆ To heed parents concerns and keep them informed of actions taken in response to a complaint.
- ◆ A full investigation will follow any report of bullying with detailed records kept of incidents, reports and complaints.
- ◆ To take appropriate action, including in school seclusion which could lead to out of school exclusion as a last resort in cases of severe bullying.
- ◆ To monitor incidents of bullying during the school year by the headteacher and Senior Management Team.
- ◆ A separate list of any racist incidents will be kept.

Help for victims and bullies.

The whole purpose of this policy must be to provide help for both the victims of bullying and also for those who are carrying it out. Whilst it may be necessary to impose the sanctions described later in this document to help resolve matters it must always be held in mind that our key aim in all strategies is not that of punishment but of help. It is our intention to ensure that bullying should stop and especially that the perpetrator should understand the hurtful nature of their actions and not reiterate similar bullying behaviour in the future.

The school has a counselling support service which can be accessed via the head teacher for both the victims and perpetrators of bullying.

Strategy for Dealing with Bullying

In dealing with bullying, staff at Howard PS follow these fundamental guidelines.

- ◆ Never ignore suspected bullying.
- ◆ Do not make premature assumptions.
- ◆ Listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils with the same version does not mean they are telling the truth.
- ◆ Adopt a problem-solving approach that moves pupils forward from self-justification.
- ◆ Follow up proven cases to check bullying has not returned.
- ◆ Keep detailed records.

Strategies have been introduced at Howard to reduce bullying. These strategies cover raising awareness about bullying and the Anti-bullying Policy, increased understanding for victims and teaching pupils how to manage relationships in a constructive way.

Staff should apply one or more of the strategies below, depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis should always be one of showing a caring and listening approach.

In response to a complaint of bullying, the discipline procedures of Howard should be followed, with staff making a full investigation, keeping detailed records and applying sanctions as necessary.

Any perceived acts of bullying should be followed by the Head Teacher or a member of the Senior Management Team who will.

1. Discuss the nature of the bullying with the 'victim' at length, recording all the facts. This will require patience and understanding.
2. Identify the bully/bullies and any witnesses.
3. Interview witnesses.
4. Discuss the incident(s) with the alleged bully/ies. Confront them with the allegations and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that this is only an investigation at this stage.

5. If the bully owns up, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable at Howard PS and what effect it has on the education of the victim and the rest of the children in the class/school. Apply sanctions relevant to the type of bullying.
6. If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further. If there is sufficient evidence that the bullying occurred, apply relevant sanctions.
7. Hold separate discussions with parents of bully and victim.
8. Sanctions for the bully include:
 - withdrawal from favoured activities, for example school visit
 - loss of break times for a period to be determined by the head teacher.
 - Fixed period of in school seclusion from class or other pupils.

If internal sanctions do not work the head teacher may decide on the following:

- barred from school during lunchtimes for a period to be determined by the head teacher.
- fixed period of exclusion from school.

Exclusion is a last resort and will only be used in the very worst incidents.

9. Provide a Pastoral Support Programme for the victim with a mentor/named person (usually the head or deputy head) monitoring and observing at break times and lunchtimes, and through discussion to make sure there is no repetition.
10. Provide a Pastoral Support Programme for the bully. This will include a Behaviour Support Programme and opportunities in circle time or groups for the child/ren to discuss relationships, feelings and the effect bullying can have on individuals. A mentor/named person will support the child during this programme.

In order to reduce incidents of bullying and recognise bullies, at Howard, all staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils. We listen, We believe, We act.

The School Council and school Bully Busters are a forum in which children can report bullying.

Bullying off the School Premises

Howard PS is not directly responsible for bullying off the school premises; however, if both the victim and the bully are from our school action will be taken as if the incident has occurred within the school, and this includes informing parents.

Although rare if a pupil or group of pupils from Howard PS is involved in a bullying incident with a pupil(s) from another school we will liaise with the other school to ensure that there is no reoccurrence.

The following steps should be taken.

- ◆ Talk to the Head Teacher of another school if their pupils are bullying off school premises.
- ◆ Talk to the Police about problems on the local streets.
- ◆ Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying situations.

Bullying Directed Towards Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation or Disability

Howard PS will not tolerate bullying against anyone because of his or her race, gender, sexual orientation or disability. The school will take preventative action to reduce the likelihood of bullying incidents of this nature occurring. Stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others, whether arising from race, gender, ability or disability.

Racial Bullying/Harassment

Racial bullying will not be tolerated in Howard PS and will be treated severely. If a child receives verbal abuse, physical threats or attacks, or if a pupil brings racist literature into school, incites others to behave in a racist way or writes racist insults, the strategies in the Policy for Education for Ethnic Diversity will be implemented.

A full investigation will be carried out, recording incidents in the school incident book has a duty to develop children's understanding of ethnic diversity issues and explore racial tolerance in PSHE and Citizenship lessons, in Religious Education lessons and in school assemblies.

Howard PS guarantees confidentiality and support for those being bullied. Proven racial incidents are reported to the Governing Body and LA as required.

Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying has an impact on both genders. Sexual bullying is characterised by abusive name-calling, comments about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty, inappropriate and uninvited touching, sexual innuendoes and propositions (i.e. sexual harassment).

Howard's strategies to deal with sexual bullying include:

- ◆ recording incidents in the incident book
- ◆ developing understanding of gender relations
- ◆ exploring sexism and sexual bullying in PSHE lessons
- ◆ using single-sex groups to discuss sensitive issues
- ◆ ensuring the school site is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable
- ◆ implementing appropriate discipline procedures as appropriate.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual bullying can also be related to sexual orientation. Children do not have to be homosexual or bi-sexual to experience such bullying. In primary school sexual name calling is sometimes used without the name caller actually

understanding what they are saying. Helping our pupils to understand appropriate and inappropriate language is a key.

Strategies to deal with such bullying include:

- ◆ recording incidents in a separate incident book
- ◆ awareness by staff that homophobic bullying can occur
- ◆ challenging homophobic language and explore pupils' understanding – they might not understand the impact
- ◆ guaranteeing confidentiality and support for those being bullied
- ◆ implement discipline procedures if the bullying warrants it.

Special Education Needs or Disabilities

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities might not be able to articulate experiences as fluently as other children. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific disability.

Howard PS makes sure the behaviour of staff does not trigger bullying unintentionally. They should avoid undue attention towards SEN children compared with others, and should not make comments based on pupils' appearance or perceived character.

We try to make classroom activities and lessons sensitive to such children's needs. We teach assertiveness and other social skills and teach victims to say 'No' or to get help. A named mentor/friend may be appointed for the pupil to confide in.

If the bullying is serious, Howard PS undertakes a full investigation, including a full discussion with witnesses, recording incidents in the incident book and contacting parents. Discipline procedures are implemented.

High attainers, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Teachers should treat this as seriously as any other type of bullying.

Any member of staff can complete a copy of the school anti bullying referral form.