

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Opening Statement

Forest Prep School is dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils; our policies and practices encompass the needs of all our children from Early Years to Year 6 across all aspects of school life including out of school provision. It is the duty of all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to play an active role in ensuring that each child's needs are met. Effective induction practices for all ITT, college and school students, volunteers and visitors aims to promote a consistent approach in meeting the needs of the whole school community.

Introduction

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated under any circumstances as it is an extreme form of unkindness. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. All aspects of bullying are to be treated seriously and every effort must be made to establish the cause of such behaviour and eradicate it. Anti-bullying is always on the agenda of the School Council and is an opportunity for members to pass on any concerns to staff.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, 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 the Internet, such as email and chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging and calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and 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. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

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:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, lacking in confidence or starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- 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 money continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (lunch has been stolen)
- 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, or is nervous and 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.

Procedures

We firmly believe in being proactive in our approach to safeguard against bullying. The development of social skills and the reinforcement of positive behaviour is addressed in PSHE sessions and School Assemblies.

All bullying behaviour or threats of bullying are investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. Strong home/school links are vital so that the bully and the bullied can be effectively supported. The school provides the following framework within which bullying is effectively addressed.

- All teaching, non teaching and volunteer staff are made aware of the schools' anti-bullying policy.
- Social interactions and behaviour of children is discussed during weekly staff meetings. Strategies are discussed to support children in the development of their social skills and to support staff development within these areas. Regular meetings with lunch time supervisors also provide a forum for discussion.
- A School Council, which consists of representatives from Year 1 - Year 6, is actively encouraged to discuss incidents/situations they are aware of or that might occur. The emphasis is on dealing with the problem with a non confrontational and empathetic approach. We are confident that by involving the children in this way they and their peers will all become more sensitive towards bullying issues and spread an awareness. Should any problem occur then children are encouraged to seek assistance from the School Council. If the problem persists then a teacher should be approached and finally, should all else fail, then the Headmaster should be asked to deal with the situation. All meetings of the School Council are minuted.
- All bullying incidents are monitored and logged by the class teacher or Headmaster.
- Action will be taken should any individuals re-offend. This would include the temporary removal of the bully from a potential bullying situation. An attempt will be made to help the bully change his/her behaviour.
- Counselling and discussion will take place with the victim and the aggressor, firstly with the class teacher and then the Deputy Head or Headmaster should the situation become more serious.
- If necessary, further measures would involve discussion with the parents.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted. Severe and persistent bullying may result in the temporary or permanent exclusion of an individual from the school.

Outcomes

- The bully may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems, or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- PSHE lessons
- events such as Anti-Bullying Week

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)	0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk