



The Ashlands and Misterton Federation Church of England First Schools

*We are a school community with a Christian ethos,
dedicated to providing optimum learning for each child
in a happy atmosphere*

Love of learning, love of life, love of one another
"Life in all it's fullness" John 10:10

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Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context to Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. We aim to provide a happy and safe learning environment where every learner can achieve their full potential.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

Ashlands and Misterton C of E First Schools are committed to a policy of inclusion, to equality and justice.

We believe that bullying behaviour is totally unacceptable.

We believe that where bullying is challenged effectively pupils will feel safe and happy and we will demonstrate a school that cares.

We believe that bullying is detrimental to the bullied and the bully.

Our bullying policy should be read in conjunction with our school's Behaviour Management policy.

Aims

Within Ashlands and Misterton Church of England First Schools we want:

- All children to feel safe to learn, play and be with others
- All children to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity
- We aim to listen carefully to what children have to say and to treat all reports seriously

The nature of bullying

There are many definitions of bullying, but it is generally accepted to be:

- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- Repeated often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments,; kicking; hitting; taking or damaging belongings; inappropriate text messaging and electronic messaging (including through web-sites, Social Networking sites and Instant Messenger); sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

To summarise the 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, including via use of technology and Cyber bullying.

Research shows that name-calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics, but pupils can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, or some form of disability.

Pupils' attitude to bullying

Pupils' understanding varies with age. Infants may confuse bullying with fighting and nasty experiences generally – making it difficult to identify actual bullying. Junior children tend to develop a more mature understanding.

The most important indication of bullying behaviour is whether the victim themselves believe that they have been subjected to bullying.

We want children to tell us if they have a problem with bullying behaviour and what they say will always be taken seriously.

Involving parents

Parental support is one of the keys to the success of our anti bullying policy.

We aim to consult and communicate with parents on a regular basis. We advise parents of the possible consequences of bringing valuable items in to school.

What should parents do if they feel their child is being bullied?

Any parent contacting the school with a particular concern will always be taken seriously. The first point of contact for the parent is the child's class teacher and we recognise that the following contributes to good practice:

- Recognising that the parent may be angry or upset;
- Keeping an open mind – bullying can be difficult to detect, so a lack of staff awareness does not mean that no bullying has occurred;
- Remaining calm and understanding;
- Making it clear that the school does care and that something will be done;
- Explaining the agreed school procedures and policy and ensuring these are followed.

If a parent does not feel that the situation has been dealt with adequately by the class teacher then the next stage of the complaints procedure is to contact the Headteacher who will complete the school's bullying concern form with the parents.

Strategies in school to prevent bullying behaviour include:

- Making clear links between our bullying policy and behaviour management policy;
- Records of conversations with parents concerning any incidents of bullying, if deemed appropriate.
- Being aware that even the youngest children can understand the consequences of their own actions;
- Listening carefully to pupils and providing opportunities for them to express views and opinions – for example during circle time;
- Multi agency work – working with Children's Social Care, Police, etc.
- Involving parents and the wider community;
- Making use of curriculum opportunities to raise pupils awareness, e.g. through RE, cross curricular themes, drama, story writing and literature;

- Including all staff in training;
- Involving governors, parents and staff in the development of the anti-bullying policy;
- Teaching victims to say 'no' or get help.

Dealing with reported incidents of bullying

At Ashlands and Misterton C of E First School we adhere to 5 key points:

1. Never ignore suspected bullying;
2. Don't make premature assumptions;
3. Listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same thing does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth;
4. Adopt a problem solving approach which moves the pupils on from justifying themselves;
5. Follow up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed.

If a child has been bullied the action that follows will depend on the severity of the incident. However, a hierarchy of sanctions will be following which are set out below.

We will:

Warn them not to do it again.

Or If it is very serious or the child has repeated the behaviour after being warned, a telephone call will be made to their parents or a letter will be sent to their parents/carers and they will lose a privilege. This procedure will be dependant on the age of the child.

Or Parents/carers will be invited in to school for a final warning before exclusion.

Or The Headteacher may make the decision to exclude the child immediately. The parents then have a right of appeal to the Governing Body and LA. It should be noted that exclusion from the school will only be used as a very last resort. There have been no official exclusions in the last three years.

There are two types of exclusion:-

- Temporary – a child is excluded for a fixed number of days, up to a maximum of 15 per term.
- Permanent – the child is not allowed to return to the school. There are parental appeal procedures that can be made against these exclusions.

Monitoring and evaluating the policy

The policy will be regularly monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher and class teachers through the following methods:

- Checking each class for frequency of incidents;
- Talking with pupils e.g. in circle time;
- Conducting sampling surveys with a group of class;
- Playground observations;
- Small group interviews – or individual interviews.