



Nelson Primary School Anti – Bullying Policy



Definition of Bullying:

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as...

*The **repetitive, intentional hurting** of one person or group, by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.*

At Nelson we recognise that bullying is different from random acts of aggression or relationship conflicts. We also understand that it is not the act which determines if it is bullying, but the effect of that act on the individual. It will be exercised through the use of power and not an exchange between equals.

Our Values:

At Nelson Primary School we strive to continually develop an environment in which everyone feels safe and is safe. Our school ethos emphasises the importance of respect for everyone. This means that we respect each other's age, disabilities, gender, race, religion, gender identity and sexual orientation.

We view bullying as being unacceptable behaviour. However, we know that it does take place in all schools and that any young person could become involved at some time. Therefore, we are committed to creating a safe environment where young people can learn and develop, confident that if they have a worry an adult will listen and offer some help. We will make it clear to pupils, along with the staff, parents and governors, that when bullying does occur we will work together as a community in accordance with the policy set out in this document to help both the 'target' and 'ringleader'. We will ensure the safety of the person being harmed and also do our best to support improved behaviour from the others involved. Throughout this process we will refrain from labelling children as either 'victim' or 'bully' as we understand that this can affect their self-image. We also understand that bullying is a group behaviour which all pupils have a role in; be it the 'ringleader', 'target', 'reinforcer', 'assistant', 'defender' or 'outsider'.

There are two separate strands that our school will adopt in response to bullying. The first is based on prevention. This is the work we will do to reduce the frequency of bullying. The second is reaction and the strategies we will use when incidents of bullying do occur.

Prevention – A Whole School Approach:

1. We have three clear 'Diamond Rules' in school which reflect our key values. These are:
 - I. *Show respect and good manners.*
 - II. *Follow instructions with thought and care.*
 - III. *Care for everyone and everything.*

We will ensure that the adults in the school act as a role model and follow these rules too. Staff do not misuse their position of power to dominate the pupils in the school. Therefore, we will avoid using derogatory comments or nicknames, sarcasm, and dominating and humiliating behaviour.

2. We will listen to the pupils when they are willing to talk about bullying and we will be sensitive to a pupil's need for privacy and respect. We will ensure that pupils know where they can seek help, (notice boards, meet and greets, school council, etc) but also that there is a limit to our confidentiality if we feel that the problem is of a more serious nature.

3. We are a 'Rights Respecting School' which means that we teach pupils about the UN Convention of the rights of a child. This includes, for example, teaching pupils about their right to be protected from conflict, cruelty, exploitation and neglect, but also their responsibility not to bully or harm each other.
4. Safeguarding is of paramount importance, and therefore, we aim to build strong links around this within our curriculum. In PHSE, we have enhanced our curriculum with references to issues that may be relevant to our children and families in the local area in which they live, such as resilience, gang culture, knife crime and drugs education, preparing them for life away from Nelson school. We follow the 'No Outsiders' scheme which uses, among other resources, images from news around the world to teach the message that there should be no outsiders within our society, celebrating difference and diversity, thus reinforcing our ethos of having no outsiders at Nelson school (See PHSE and Curriculum planning for details). We also have weekly 'R Time' sessions which aim to teach the Diamond Rules and daily 'peer massage' which teaches pupils about appropriate touch and their right to say 'no' to touch. We use the technique of 'usualising' in lessons, where we make our pupils aware of the existence of people who are seen as different, such as people with disabilities or LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans) people. This leads to 'actualising' where, having established a new language, we can discuss real issues dealing with discrimination.
5. Nelson Primary School has been awarded the 'Be Healthy' Standard. We will work hard to ensure that we continue to meet the criteria for this, especially the section around 'emotional health'. We have annual 'Anti-Bullying Week' and also a 'Staying Safe Week'. Throughout these weeks pupils take part in a variety of activities aimed at tackling issues related to bullying, such as the role of the outsider, the importance of speaking out and e-safety, including cyber bullying. We use recorded data in school to identify priority areas to be addressed. Each term, we also have 'debating afternoons' which pupils debate relevant topics. This encourages pupils to listen to and respect others' ideas
6. Finally, pupils who do begin to show signs of anti social behaviour, or pupils identified as vulnerable, are given priority over time with the schools Learning Mentors. If concerns are significant, our Family Support Worker completes '3 houses signs of safety and well-being' intervention to determine if an Early Help Assessment and Our Family Plan are needed.

Reaction – Dealing with Incidents of Bullying:

Even with our prevention programme in action, we understand that there will still be some incidents of bullying. Because of this, it is important that we have a set guideline to follow when incidents do occur.

The two aims of the intervention will be:

- 1) To make the 'target' feel safe.
- 2) To encourage better behaviour from the ringleader', 'reinforcers', 'assistants' and 'outsiders'.

At Nelson Primary School we understand that simply 'punishing' the ringleader does not work. In fact it will often make things worse as the he/she will want to take further revenge on the target. If we want to encourage disclosure and work positively with ringleaders then everyone in the school must know that effective action will be taken but it will not lead with a sanction. **Only in extreme cases of abuse or continued bullying after intervention will it be seen as necessary to think of alternative actions, such as exclusions.** Instead, the focus of our plan to reduce bullying will be to give the ringleader the opportunity to acknowledge that there is a problem, to know the distress that they have created and to understand that they have the ability to change their behaviour. In order to do this we will follow the 'No Blame Approach' (created by Maines and Robinson). It is a simple seven-step procedure that is usually led by the Senior Learning Mentor.

Step One: Talk to the target

When an incident of bullying has become apparent the facilitator should start by talking to the target. They should encourage the target to describe how they feel with reflective comments. It is important that the

he/she understands and gives consent to this process. Sometimes there may be a fear that it could lead to further victimisation but when the whole 'no blame' aspect is explained the target will usually feel safe and relieved that something is being done. The facilitator should end the meeting by:

- Checking that nothing confidential has been discussed which should not be disclosed to the group.
- Asking the target to suggest the names of those involved, some assistants and reinforcers and some defenders and outsiders who will help make up the group.
- Inviting the target to produce a piece of writing or a picture, which will illustrate their unhappiness.
- Offering the target an opportunity to talk again at any time during the procedure if things are not going well.

The target is not invited to join the group to present their own account as it is possible that they will make accusations, provoke denial or justification and undermine the problem solving approach.

Step Two: Convene a meeting with the people involved

The facilitator arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved and suggested by the target. A group of six to eight works well. This is an opportunity for the facilitator to use their judgement to balance the group so that helpful and reliable young people are included alongside those whose behaviour has been causing distress. The aim is to use the strengths of the group members to bring about the best outcome.

Step Three: Explain the problem

The facilitator starts by telling the group that they have a problem and that they are worried about the child being bullied. They should then recount the story of the target's unhappiness and use the piece or drawing to help emphasise the distress. At no time should blame be allocated to the group. The aim is to try to create empathy towards the target from the group.

Step Four: Share responsibility

When the account is finished, the listeners may look downcast or uncomfortable and be uncertain about the reasons for the meeting. The facilitator may remind the group that bullying is a group behaviour and everyone is responsible for ending it. The facilitator may refer to the roles, but will not ask individuals to identify which 'role' they have taken in the incident. Some may be anxious about the possible consequences. The teacher should therefore explain that:

- No one is in trouble or going to be punished.
- There is joint responsibility to help the target be happy and safe.
- The group has been convened to help solve the problem.

Step Five: Ask the group members for their help

Group members are usually genially moved by the account of the target's distress and relieved that they are not in trouble. No one has been pushed into a corner by accusations and the power of the group has shifted from the 'ringleader' to the group as a whole, whose members withdraw consent for the behaviour to continue.

Each member of the group is then encouraged to suggest a way in which the target could be helped to feel happier. These ideas should be stated in the 'I' language of intention. Ideas are owned by the group members and imposed by the teacher. The teacher should make positive responses, but not attempt to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step Six: Leave it up to them

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. No written record is made of the group's plans – it is left as a matter of trust. The teacher thanks them, expresses confidence in a positive outcome and arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step Seven: Meet them again

About a week later, the teacher discusses with each pupil, including the target, how things are going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the children involved in the process. These meetings should be with one group member at a time so that each can give a statement about their contribution without creating a competitive atmosphere. It does not matter if everyone has kept his or her intention, as long as the bullying has stopped. The target does not have to become the most popular person in the class, just safe and happy.

Parents will always be informed if their child has been identified as either a 'ringleader' or 'target'.

Types of Bullying

At Nelson Primary School, we know that we are all different and unique. Therefore, **NO** type of bullying will be tolerated. This includes:

- **Racist** – racist taunts and gestures, graffiti, remarks about ethnicity, religion, culture.
- **Sexual** – sexually abusive comments, unwanted physical contact, gestures of a sexual nature.
- **Homophobic** – focusing on one's sexuality or feelings about it, comments such as "gay", "puff", "lesbian".
- **Appearance** – name calling about someone's physical appearance.
- **Home circumstances** – negative comments about e.g. young carers or looked- after children.
- **Gifted and Talented** – name calling, innuendo or negative peer pressure based on high levels of ability or effort.
- **Cyber** – making threats or causing upset through internet, email, chat rooms, mobile telephones, cameras or videos.
- **SEN / Disability** – name calling, innuendo or negative stereotyping based on disability or learning difficulties. Excluding from activity on the basis of disability or learning difficulty.

The Equality Act 2010 states that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

Any incidents of **bullying and racism** should be recorded in the log kept in the Head teachers office. Racist name-calling can be more hurtful than other forms. By implication this type of behaviour denigrates the person's whole family and culture. Such remarks can be more serious than other forms of abuse in that they arise out of, and may reinforce, racial prejudices. The context in which it occurs will influence the response. However, racial harassment will not be tolerated. (See 'Equal Opportunity Policy')

The Law

Bullying has a negative impact for everyone at Nelson Primary, which is why the whole school community should work together to prevent it, and if it cannot be prevented on every occasion, to deal with it appropriately.

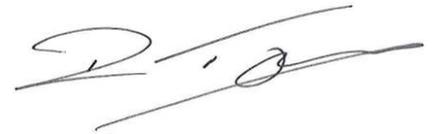
Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Head teachers the ability to discipline pupils for poor behaviour that occurs even when the pupil is not on the school premises or under the lawful control of school staff. This means that where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon.

Although bullying is not seen as a specific criminal offence, harassment and threatening behaviour is. E.g. the 'Malicious Communications Act 1988 states that it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety. **Cyber bullying** is becoming a growing concern in the UK. The Education Act 2011 gives teachers the power to search for and delete inappropriate images on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a **child protection** concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.' Where this is the case, school will report any concerns to the Children's Social Care Team.

Approved by Board of Governors April 2021 23rd March 2022

Signed
(Chair of Governors)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. J. O.', written in a cursive style.

Review date: April 2024