

Anti-Bullying Policy

We believe that all children have the right to play and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment. If behavioural expectations are consistent and reasonable boundaries are in place by caring and supportive practitioners, we can minimise the occurrence of bullying.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. No one person or group, whether staff or child, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at school.

Although many of the definitions of bullying do not generally occur at our Nursery Schools due to the age and development level of pupils it is recognised by practitioners that preschool children are developing their personalities and friendships. Children are exploring boundaries and appropriate behaviour which can result in conflict and clashes of personality during play. There is limited academic research regarding the age at which children demonstrating premeditated bullying behaviour but staff recognise that older, more able children may begin to develop behaviours that if unchallenged may lead to bullying.

Practitioners minimise occurrences by being observant and recognising that some children prefer the company of others and some don't. Often children are the best of friends on one day and fall out the next. Fully understanding each child and observing them helps with the restorative approach used at our Nursery Schools. Staff support children to develop appropriate behaviours by intervening to guide children and support them to find suitable ways to express their feelings and to develop the skills to compromise and overcome difficult situations. If any level of children's behaviour becomes repetitive or of increasing concern staff raise these concerns with senior staff and support strategies are planned to support the child to moderate their behaviour.

How do we define bullying?

Bullying is defined as behaviour which occurs repeatedly over time and which intentionally hurts another or a group of people physically or emotionally, for example by making them feel uncomfortable or threatened. It may be motivated by prejudice against a particular group (for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability). It may include:

Emotional	Being unfriendly or tormenting another
Physical	Hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings
Prejudice-based	Taunts, gestures or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic eg gender, race or sexuality
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

What we do to prevent bullying

In order to prevent inappropriate behaviours or bullying, we adopt the following procedures:

- Providing an enabling and proactive environment in order to minimise opportunities for inappropriate behaviours
- Promote caring, co-operative behaviour, through daily routines and activities, circle time, group discussions and all activities that promote the Early Learning Goals
- Observe the children closely at all times, including when they are playing;
- Staff have a firm but fair and consistent approach to behaviour management providing children with clear boundaries. Rules are simple and easy to understand.
- Recognise that active physical aggression in the early years is part of the child's development but ensure that it is channelled in a positive way;
- Help children to understand that using aggression to get things is inappropriate and encourage them to resolve problems in other ways;
- Encourage children to recognise that bullying, fighting, hurtful and discriminatory comments or exclusion of others are not acceptable forms of behaviour;
- Help children to recognise that certain actions are right and that others are wrong;
- Intervene to initiate games and activities with children, when we feel play has become aggressive, both indoors or outside;
- Children are encouraged to treat everyone with respect.
- Use teaching materials which give a positive view point and do not give negative views or stereotypes of particular groups.
- Treat any concerns raised by parents or children seriously. Concerns will be fully investigated so that the appropriate strategies can be put in place to support all children involved and to eradicate any behaviours that cause concern.
- We will speak openly with parents/carers in order to formulate a mutual agreement regarding action to move the situation forwards in a way which meets individual needs. If necessary, outside agencies will be contacted in order to support the school, child and parents/carers.

What we do if we believe that bullying is taking place:

If we believe that inappropriate behaviour amounts to bullying, we will:

- adopt a policy of immediate intervention when we think a child is being bullied, however mild or "harmless" it may seem
- talk to all children involved (both victims and bullies) about their behaviour and about ways of interacting more positively together
- acknowledge children's feelings and help them understand how others might be feeling
- adopt appropriate strategies from the Behaviour Management Policy- this includes asking children to apologise if they have behaved inappropriately to another in some circumstances. The child who has been upset will be comforted and the adult will confirm that the other child's behaviour is not acceptable.
- Contact the parents of all the children involved in any instance of bullying so that it can be discussed fully with the parents to look for a consistent resolution to the behaviour.

If any parent has a concern about their child, a member of staff is always available to discuss those concerns. It is only by co-operation that we can ensure our children feel confident and secure in their environment, both at home and at school.

Approved by the Governing Board on 8th November 2024

Last review date: 2nd November 2024

Next review due by: November 2026