

Peel Common Primary School



PEEL COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Reviewed	Autumn 2024
Next review	Autumn 2027
Chair of Governor's signature	<i>City- Leader</i>

At Peel Common Primary School we accept that children will fall out with one another at times and that this is a normal part of growing up and establishing relationships. However – when a child is subjected to deliberately hurtful behaviour and this is repeated over a period of time in situations where the child finds defence difficult – then the child is being bullied. We believe that such incidents of bullying are best dealt with in a context of close partnership between home and school.

A person may be being bullied if they:

- are hurt either emotionally or physically
- feel threatened or intimidated
- feel isolated
- have a problem which is ongoing

Principles for the prevention of, and dealing, with bullying

- the school will not tolerate bullying of any kind
- the school will promote equal opportunities and tolerance regardless of age, sex, size, race, religion, interests, abilities or disabilities to children and adults alike
- when bullying is identified to staff the situation will be dealt with according to the guidelines
- support will be given to both victim and bully

Aims for the prevention of, and dealing with, bullying

Our aims in establishing a bullying policy are that the school will:

- provide a secure and caring environment which promotes confidence and self esteem in everyone
- enable children to learn and rehearse suitable strategies for dealing with potential bullying situations through the planned curriculum
- will discuss with the children worries or concerns and provide support as appropriate
- provide the opportunity for children to express their feelings about the way they are treated by others through Circle Time, assemblies and PSHE lessons
- ensure fair and consistent reinforcement of school expectations and positive behaviour through thoughtful classroom management
- set aside quiet areas in the playground for those children who do not wish to play games or run around at playtime or lunchtime

Signs of being bullied:

A child who is being bullied may show the following signs:

- a fear of walking to and from school
- not wanting to go to school
- frequent headaches, stomach aches etc.
- a fall in standard of school work
- not as happy as usual or not wanting to talk about school

- frequent loss of or unusual requests for money
- not sleeping well
- bruises, scratches etc.
- obvious distress but not wanting to talk about it

It is generally a combination of several of these that indicate bullying rather than one alone. It also needs to be remembered that these signs could indicate other worries or issues other than being bullied. Concerns for a child should be discussed with the headteacher or classteacher who may have relevant prior knowledge.

STRATEGIES FOR THE PREVENTION OF AND DEALING WITH BULLYING

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- it is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- it is repeated often over a period of time
- it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can take many forms but the four main types are:

- physical – kicking, hitting, taking belongings
- verbal – name-calling, insulting or racist remarks
- indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, unkind exclusion of someone from social groups
- cyberbullying – using social media platforms to directly or indirectly cause emotional harm or the threat of physical harm

It is important to take action against bullying because it is behaviour which is intended to cause distress and create an imbalance of power. The emotional damage caused by bullying can be severe and long term. Unless action is taken against bullying, victims may end up believing they deserved to be bullied, resulting in them feeling powerless and vulnerable. Their self esteem may be badly damaged with long term repercussions. The repair of such damage can also be a drain on time and resources that should be spent on teaching and learning.

If there is a witnessed or reported incident, the adult involved will initially deal with it by assessing the situation and acting accordingly.

This will involve:

- talking to all individuals involved
- communicating action taken to the appropriate member/s of staff (usually the classteacher) and recording it accordingly
- ensuring that parents receive correct information if this is thought necessary

- continuing support and guidance for both victim and bully from an appropriate adult
- reviewing with individuals after a decided time interval

Reasons why bullying may not be reported:

- the victim does not perceive they have a means of letting others know about the problem
- a fear of drawing attention to the problem will make it worse
- belief that parents and teachers cannot do anything to stop it
- adults do not understand about school life
- an expectation that you have to be able to stand up for yourself and cope
- feeling ashamed about being unpopular
- feeling guilty for being weak and not being able to stick up for yourself
- hoping the bullies will go away and pick on someone else
- an acceptance that it is part of life and you just have to put up with it

Process for dealing with bullying

The school will provide a clear process and strategies that will be understood by both children and adults for dealing with the incidents of bullying. This will involve a consistent system of recording incidents by all adults including LSAs and lunchtime staff so that patterns of behaviour can be identified. Information will be recorded on CPOMS. It is acknowledged that LSAs and lunchtime supervisors are in key positions to ensure consistency during transition and playtimes. It will be the responsibility of the Headteacher to identify and investigate persistent patterns of behaviour.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff will investigate incidents sensitively. One off incidents will be dealt with through the implementation of the Behaviour Policy. Severe or persistent incidents will be referred to the Headteacher to be dealt with directly.

Incidents and actions will be recorded on CPOMS.

First steps in dealing with a report or incident:

- remain calm – reacting emotionally can add to the situation
- take the incident seriously
- reassure the victim they have done the right thing in telling
- take action as quickly as possible
- find out the names of all children involved
- sanctions given to be in line with the Peel Common Primary School Behaviour Policy, depending on the severity of the incident. Care should be taken that

punishment expresses only disapproval and not reinforcement that bullying is acceptable

- explain clearly any punishment and its reasons

If the incident is severe:

- inform headteacher and other relevant colleagues such as other class teachers, office staff, LSAs if necessary
- inform other colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation such as unsupervised breaks
- inform parents if necessary reassuring them of actions taken and reasons why

Final steps

- do not make further references to incident unless providing support or guidance to individuals
- provide strategies to both bully and victim to prevent re-occurrences
- agree a time scale to review situation with all parties concerned
- follow up further reports or incidents with equal commitment

Avoid:

- becoming over protective to victim – allow them to help themselves
- making assumptions about the bully – remain objective about the behaviour
- keeping the incident to yourself because you have dealt with it
- speaking to parents without a constructive plan for dealing with the situation

Outcomes

- bully may be asked to genuinely apologise
- sanctions as set out in the Behaviour Policy may be used
- in serious incidents, internal suspension or exclusion will be considered
- if possible, the children will be reconciled through mediation
- situation will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place

School Responsibilities

The school will listen sympathetically to parents' concerns about any reported incidents of bullying. It will investigate sensitively and thoroughly. If bullying behaviour is discovered the school will support the victim with appropriate strategies and address the bullying behaviour as set out in the Anti-Bullying Policy. Parents will be fully informed of any actions taken and their support welcomed. The school and parents will work together to resolve the situation and review as needed.

Combating bullying through the planned curriculum.

Children will be taught a range of skills to support both victims of bullying and the bullies themselves through the school's curriculum. This will include opportunities such as role-play, discussions, circle time, hot seating and drama. Children will be encouraged to become assertive rather than aggressive and to look at differences and the meaning of tolerance through curriculum areas such as SEAL, PSHE, RE

and Geography. Bullying will also be highlighted in themed events such as Anti-Bullying Week and NSPCC workshops.

In addition, teachers have an awareness of issues in the classroom – teasing or pressurising of others. Teachers will not leave such behaviour unchallenged, and will support children in responding appropriately. Children will be taught ways to refuse to comply with a bully's demands and be encouraged to use 'I' for communicating – "I don't like you doing that." "I want you to stop it." Children will be given opportunities to respond assertively to situations, supported by the classroom teacher. A child who is excluded from social groups because of their unacceptable behaviour in those groups, will be encouraged and supported in examining such behaviour, and working towards improving their social skills.

The school will make its Anti-Bullying Policy known to pupils, parents, staff and governors. The Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Governors.

Parent Responsibilities

If a child reports bullying to their parents, parents should support their child by:

- believing what they are saying
- gently determining the facts
- reassuring their child that they did the right thing and that parents and school will help
- arrange a meeting with classteacher and headteacher
- calmly explain the situation to the school
- working with the school to agree intervention and support

Child Responsibilities

Most children will not be involved in bullying behaviour, but they are likely to know it is happening or even witness it taking place. They may do nothing to stop it because they are afraid, uncomfortable or not know what they should do. Whilst vigilante behaviour is not an appropriate response, children should be encouraged to exert positive peer pressure so that they can take an active stand against bullying behaviour. Children should be aware of their responsibilities to stop bullying by:

- not allowing someone to be deliberately left out of a group as a means of persecution or an act of unkindness
- not smiling or laughing when someone is being bullied
- telling an adult what is happening
- encouraging the victim to join in with their activities or groups
- telling the bully to stop what they are doing
- showing the bully that they disapprove of their actions

Being passive about bullying can both allow it to happen and encourage it. Children need to be able to rehearse and act out responsible strategies for taking an active role against bullying.

Reasons why children bully other children.

Bullying behaviour generally gives the bully a 'gain' and in order for the behaviour to be addressed, the 'gain' needs to be understood. Bullying behaviour will not be modified unless the bully perceives there is something else or better to gain.

Some reasons given for bullying include:

- fun/entertainment
- boredom
- revenge
- material gains eg money, goods
- status – showing off to peers
- because the victim is perceived as different, an easy target or isolated
- because it is an accepted behaviour
- to compensate for failing in school or for having no friends
- to have control over someone else when they have little control of their own

Family Factors

There is no clear picture of who constitutes a victim of bullying. Anyone could be vulnerable at any time, but there is some evidence that some victims are overprotected and enmeshed within the family.

Particular family circumstance such as separation, divorce, financial or medical problems could cause stress within a family which results in a period of aberrant behaviour. However the families of bullies can be financially secure, but aggression may stem from inappropriate assertiveness or ambition. Parents could be over eager for a child to succeed academically or in sport which results in dominance being confused with leadership. Other factors might include:

- harsh, punitive discipline
- lax, inconsistent discipline
- lack of warmth
- assertiveness as a measure of success
- aggression acceptable in the family
- street culture
- fewer family contact hours
- family scapegoat

Generally bullies tend to be 'doers' – children who are physically strong, energetic, well co-ordinated confident communicators. Victims on the other hand tend to be 'watchers' – physically weak, low energy, shy, withdrawn, isolated, poor communicators.

Strategies for Working with those who display bullying behaviours.

Whatever strategies are chosen, it is essential that they are closely monitored and evaluated. It is at best useless, and at worst dangerous, to implement a strategy and simply hope that it is working. Victims are reluctant to talk about their plight and may well not complain, even if the situation continues or becomes more distressing.

The Immediate Response

The immediate response must be an attempt to stop the bullying, to ensure the physical, social and psychological well being of those bullied and those observing the behaviour.

If the bully is not genuinely committed to change, the most expedient first response is:

- (a) Stop the bullying – ensure that the school is a safe environment
Be vigilant in setting up tight supervision and communication systems so that all incidents can be dealt with immediately.
To ignore is to condone.
- (b) Make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable to staff and pupils.
Disapproval should be unambiguous. Stress that it is the behaviour and not the pupil that is unacceptable.
- (c) Outline the sanctions which will be imposed if the bullying continues.
- (d) Try to support the bully in changing the behaviour. Allow the bully to talk freely about the behaviour in the context of change.
- (e) Ensure all staff have the same viewpoint and are committed to handling the issue immediately and in an agreed manner.

Further strategies

1. Explore the possibility of the bullying being a compensatory activity ie no friends, poor academic attainments, hopeless at sport.
2. Offer social skills work in group or class sessions for dealing with such things as name-calling, feelings of anger, frustration, conflict resolution and reciprocity – i.e. seeing another's viewpoint.
3. Identify current cultural heroes, i.e. discuss TV commercials and other media sources to identify the promotion of the 'macho' male or other dominating figures, versus aspirational qualities.
4. Use drama to explore how others feel.
5. Set up situations where the bully and victim can talk freely but with adult support.
6. Offer teaching situations where the bully and victim can get to know each other better in a safe and supported atmosphere eg peer tutoring, collaborative learning.

7. Discuss aggression with the parents – how adult attitudes are modelled. This may need specialist input by a psychologist or social worker etc.
8. Concentrate on the good behaviour shown by the bully, especially if humour is a talent. Often young people use this ability to make fun of the vulnerable and elicit group support. It is very difficult for peers to resist joining in and laughing if the bully is particularly witty or a good mimic. Explore more positive ways of using wit and jokes to gain group approval.
9. Use curriculum opportunities to counteract stereotyping, cultural and religious prejudice.
10. Always ensure that adults and older pupils are modelling appropriate behaviour throughout the day so that pupils clearly see frustration, conflict, stress etc. handled in a mature and appropriate manner. Labelling and scapegoating can, sadly, too often be encouraged by careless comments from staff in the presence of other pupils. We need to monitor our own behaviour rigorously if we are to avoid colluding with pupils in nominating a victim.
11. Any damage or unfortunate circumstances caused by the bullying must be redressed as soon as possible and responsibility taken by the bully.
12. A problem-solving approach is often effective, in that a discussion situation, where the bully is guided to examine the problem and offer solutions, can avoid an over-emotive atmosphere. The choice of best response can be made by the bully. The situation will need to be monitored carefully to ensure that change has been effected, as the victim may not complain a second time.
13. All ways possible should be sought to address the need felt by the bully to use such behaviours.
14. The class or year group need to understand bullying behaviour and the adverse effects that it can produce – the distress and humiliation. Peer group pressure can be used very effectively to support those scapegoated. It must be made clear that to ignore is to condone the behaviour and that all ways possible for the group to refuse to join in the taunting should be explored. This is a delicate process and it must be made clear that the whole, or the greater part of the group, must do this. It must not be left for just one or two pupils to stand up to the distressing behaviour. In addition, there must be no bullying of the bully. Drama, literature, art and discussions are very effective ways of introducing and supporting this kind of work.

Strategies for working with those who have been bullied.

When supporting children following a report or incident of bullying, staff must ensure they do not aggravate any physical or emotional distress. Particular care must be taken not to expose a child to the risk of continued bullying. When investigating incidents staff will need to be sensitive to this and initially interview victim and bully separately.

Strategies for supporting and protecting a bullied child might include:

- provide regular opportunities for discussions to monitor the victim's view of the ongoing situation.
- avoid embarrassing or shaming the bullied child by focussing on the incident with the whole class when the child is present.
- ask supportive children to ensure the victim is befriended and protected, for example at break time and /or walking home.
- allocate a named member of staff who the victim is comfortable confiding in, to be available to discuss matters informally.
- provide opportunities for the bullied child to discuss their views through mediated groups such as Circle Time, SEAL and PSHE lessons. Discuss pupils and class suggestions for solving the problem.
- promote self esteem through appropriate small group work such as a social skills group.
- consider referring a bullied child to outside agencies which may provide specialist expertise, such as Educational Psychology Service or Child and Family Guidance.
- draw up an individual plan with short term targets for supporting interpersonal skills and peer relationship difficulties, for example joining a group of children at playtime to avoid being isolated and vulnerable to bullies.
- never promise not to pass on or tell information to others if the child disclosed matters of a serious nature.

BULLYING – Don't suffer in silence

Information for pupils

Being bullied means:

- being physically hurt or having your belongings taken
- being called names or talked about in a hurtful way
- feeling scared or left out
- having things happen to you over a period of time

When you are being bullied

- be firm and clear – look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- tell an adult what has happened straight away

After you have been bullied

- tell a teacher or another adult in your school
- tell your family
- if you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- keep on speaking up until someone listens
- don't blame yourself for what has happened
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When you are talking about bullying with an adult, be clear about

- what has happened to you
- how often it has happened
- who was involved
- who saw what was happening
- where it happened
- what you have done about it already

If you see someone else being bullied

- tell an adult
- don't laugh or smile
- tell the bully to stop
- encourage the person being bullied to join in with your group or activity, so they are not left on their own
- show by your own conduct that you do not approve of what the bully is doing

BULLYING – Don't suffer in silence**Information for parents and families**

All schools are likely to have some problems with bullying at one time or another. Although bullying is not prevalent at Peel Common Primary School, it is still important that we take steps to reduce and prevent bullying, as part of our commitment to your child's continued development.

Bullying behaviour includes:

- name calling and teasing
- physical violence
- threats
- isolating individuals from group activities sustained over a period of time

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping schools deal with bullying.

First, discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve the difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

Second, ask to see our anti-bullying policy. An anti-bullying policy is a document which sets out how the school deals with incidents of bullying. You have a right to know about this policy, which is for parents as much as staff and pupils.

Third, watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

If your child has been bullied:

- calmly talk with your child about his/her experience
- make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened
- reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher immediately
- make an appointment to see your child's class teacher or the head teacher
- explain clearly the problems your child is experiencing

Talking with teachers about bullying:

- try and stay calm – bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened – give dates, places and names of other children involved
- make a note of what action the school intends to take
- ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
- stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

If you are not satisfied:

Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by the school might like to consider the following steps:

- make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher; keep a record of the meeting
- if this does not help, write to the Chair of governors explaining your concerns and what you would like to see happening
- contact local or national parent support groups for advice
- as the last resort, contact the Secretary of State for Education

If your child is bullying other children

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it is wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sister or other people in the family whom they admire
- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings

To stop your child from bullying others

- talk with your child; explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's class teacher, discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop him/her bullying others
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is co-operative or kind to other people

Resources

Advice for parents and families about bullying:

Supporting schools against bullying:

Bullying and how to fight it. A Mellor (1993).

SCRE, 15 St John Street, Edinburgh EH8 8JR (available from good bookshops)

Fighting, teasing and bullying: simple and effective ways to help your child, J

Pearce (1989). Thorsons, Wellingborough (available from good bookshops)

Organisations which can help:

Advisory Centre for Education, Tel: 0300 0115 142 Advice line for parents on all matters concerning schools. Mon-Weds 10am – 1pm

Anti Bullying Alliance, National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakley Street, London EC1V
aba@ncb.org.uk

Advice for parents and children

Children's Legal Centre, 20 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN.

Tel: 01206 714650 Publications and free advice on legal issues

Kidscape, 152 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9TR

Tel: 020 7730 3300 Publications and advice.

Parentline, Westbury House, 57 Hart Road, Thundersley, Essex SS7 3PD

Tel: 01890 927277 Groups provide support for parents under stress. List of local groups available