

SODBURY VALE FEDERATION

Anti-Bullying Policy

Our vision at our federated schools is that all are loved and valued. Children are encouraged to value and respect themselves and others, encouraging and supporting each other with compassion, forgiveness and understanding.

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|-----------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Policy Number</i> | <i>SVF013</i> |
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2 VERSION HISTORY

| Version Number | Reason for Issue | Date of Issue |
|----------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| 01 | Initial Issue For Federation | May 2022 |
| 02 | Appendix added | Jan 2024 |
| 03 | Review and update | April 2024 |
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| | | |

3 OVERVIEW

3.1 RATIONALE

Sodbury Vale Federaton and the schools within it believe that in order for pupils to learn to the best of their ability they must have a safe and friendly environment in which to spend their time.

3.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to promote consistency of approach and to create a climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable.

3.3 BULLYING DEFINITIONS

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

A Bully

We define a bully as somebody who is habitually cruel to another.

A Victim of Bullying

Somebody who is selectively subjected to mistreatment over a period of time.

The three main types of bullying are:

| Physical | Verbal | Indirect/Emotional Upset |
|--|--|--|
| e.g. repeated biting, hair pulling hitting, kicking , pinching, punching, pushing, scratching, spitting or another form of physical attack. It also includes damaging or stealing another person's property theft | e.g. repeated intimidation or threats of violence, name calling, racist remarks, spiteful teasing or cruel remarks | e.g. repeated spreading of malicious rumours, deliberately manipulating relationships and ruining friendships; purposely excluding, ignoring and isolating someone from social groups |

Bullying can be any one of the above or a combination of them.

Actions commonly mistaken for bullying:

- playful teasing
- isolated irresponsible or unkind acts
- a one off fight or ongoing rivalry/disagreement

- rough and tumble or play fighting with no intention of causing damage.
- a/one off physical, verbal, indirect incident

These incidents are dealt with under the Discipline & Behaviour Policy.

4 AIMS OF POLICY

- a) To promote a safe and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.
- b) To take positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through a clear school policy on personal and social development.
- c) To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a partnership which helps create a bully-free environment.
- d) To make staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve the above aims.
- e) To ensure there are no issues involving the background of children: beliefs, religious views, gender, homophobic, transphobic, disabled or racial abuse

5 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) To treat any report of bullying seriously.
- b) To listen to all parties involved in incidents
- c) To make such enquiries as may be necessary to clarify exactly what has been happening.
- d) To assure the pupil/pupils that they have acted correctly in reporting the bullying.
- e) To take appropriate action or to refer the matter to a senior member of staff or the Headteacher.
- f) To record and inform parents of bullying incidents.
- g) To promote the use of a range of teaching and learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behaviour.
- h) To foster by example the values we as a school believe in.
- i) To monitor the extent to which the above are being carried out by: -
 - Regular discussions with staff, pupils and parents.
 - Recording incidents of bullying in a discipline file. (This will also include the recording of all incidents which are described by the victim as bullying.)
 - Retaining records for monitoring purposes.

6 PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS REPORTED AS BULLYING.

Determine whether the incident reported to you is bullying. Does it comply with the policy definition of bullying?

NO

- The incident should be dealt with by reference to the school's policy for Discipline and Behaviour and appropriate action/sanctions applied.

YES

The key messages to get across to the person being bullied are: -

- It is not your fault that you are being bullied.
- You do not have to face this on your own

The incident should be dealt with using the following procedure.

1. Details will be recorded using the Bullying Incidents pro -forma. (Appendix 3)
2. Investigate the truth of the allegation by talking to the victim of the bullying and establishing clearly the following facts: -
 - When and where did the bullying occur?
 - What form did the bullying take?
 - How often is it happening?
 - Who was responsible? Were there any witnesses?
3. Ask the child what they would like done about the bullying. This will determine whether the action to be taken is direct or indirect.
 - **Indirect** - This requires the matter to be dealt with through the use of circle time (Appendix 1) and will be the responsibility of the class teacher. The way a member of the class is feeling and being treated will be discussed and suggestions taken from the children as to how this situation can be resolved. These suggestions will be implemented and the situation monitored over the next one/two weeks to see if there is any change. If there appears to be no change and the bullying continues then it will be necessary to take direct action. If the bullying stops then it will still require regular monitoring to ensure that there is no repetition.
 - **Direct** - This requires the bullies to be confronted and details of how the victim is feeling made clear. The child/children carrying out the bullying are told that this behaviour is unacceptable and are given the opportunity to make amends. One of the intervention strategies detailed in Appendix 2 of this policy will also be implemented. The teacher will then carefully monitor the situation. This will involve regular discussion with the victim to ensure that the bullying is not continuing. The parents of the child/children carrying out the bullying will be informed. Should the bullying continue then the parents will be consulted prior to the imposition of sanctions against the bully/bullies.

The sanctions to be used are

1. Loss of breaktimes.

2. Loss of breaktimes and the setting of a task for the child to complete.
3. Moving the child to another class.
4. Exclusion

7 ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN SUPPORT OF THIS POLICY

In addition to the procedures set out above the following action will also be taken: -

- Circle time will occupy a regular slot in the timetable of each class with additional sessions when appropriate.
- A “Circle Time Box” will be introduced in each KS2 classroom to provide an opportunity for pupils to let their teacher know of any problems that are bothering them. The use of the “Circle Time Box ” will be explained to pupils prior to its introduction.
- Bullying will be the focus of school assemblies throughout the year.
- Bullying will be the focus of class lessons (PSHE) at various points during the year

8 APPENDIX 1 - CIRCLE TIME

The use of circle time in schools developed from quality circles which have been used in industry for many years. Jenny Mosley, who has done much to popularise its use says that it was used in industry, "to overcome the gulf that can develop between management and the shop floor... the reputation for quality which Japan enjoys can be attributed largely to the widespread use of the approach". Circle time also has roots in social group work and in solution focussed therapeutic approaches. The method is now in widespread use in schools across the UK. There is an increasing awareness of its benefits as part of whole school policy aimed at creating a positive ethos and dealing more effectively with problems such as bullying

Creating the Right Conditions

An open circle of chairs or cushions is all the equipment that is needed. There should be no tables or desks which could act as a barrier - or a support for slumping heads! Care should be taken so that the circle is as perfect as possible, allowing each face to be seen by all other participants. Many schools also use a 'talking object' to facilitate discussion. The talking object can be anything - a teddy bear or other cuddly toy, a cushion or a decorated piece of wood or plastic can be used. This talking object is passed around the circle and the only person who is allowed to talk is the person holding the talking object.

What does the Teacher do?

The teacher is a part of the circle and sits on the same type of chair or cushion as everyone else. This helps to signal that what is happening is a special kind classroom activity in which the teacher is a facilitator rather than a director. He or she has a special responsibility to ensure that the agreed rules are kept, that the emotions of individuals are protected and that suitable activities are prepared. The teacher must also be ready to draw a session to a close if pupils are persistently breaking the rules. This can happen, and it is important that the failure of one session does not lead to the method being abandoned. For some pupils this type of activity, in which they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own words and actions, is new and takes some getting used to.

What are the Rules?

The most important thing about the rules for circle time is that they should be discussed and agreed by all members. This is one of the first activities that should take place. Three basic rules which should be discussed are:

- Only one person should speak at once - the talking object helps this rule
- You can "pass" if you don't want to speak about something
- No put downs

The first of these helps to create order and to encourage people to listen to others. The second and third help to ensure the emotional safety of children taking part:

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nobody should be forced to speak about something which they find embarrassing and nobody should be ridiculed for saying something in which they genuinely believe - however much others may disagree with their views. The group may state these rules in other ways and may add extra ones.

Keep it Positive

There is a possibility that this could be a negative activity - a moaning session in class time. The teacher should set the tone by taking every opportunity to make positive comments - "that was very interesting" or "thank you, that was really helpful". If, during an open discussion a negative comment is made (e.g. "the school toilets smell") the teacher should encourage others to suggest solutions rather than just allowing them to echo the complaint. The emphasis is on problem solving - a solution focussed approach rather than going over and over the past.

Getting Started

It is good to start each session with a game. This can help to relax everybody or to trigger discussion. For example, a game that can be used to develop trust involve the participants forming pairs. The first person holds his or her hand exactly 30 centimetres in front of the second person's face. The second person now has to try to keep that position while the first slowly moves his or her hand around. As people stretch out on tiptoe or descend to floor level in an attempt to maintain the required separation things can get noisy so insist on silence - anyone breaking the rule is "out". After a minute roles are reversed. This could precede a discussion about the nature of trust.

A Mexican wave can be used to promote co-operation or a guessing game could be used to help develop questioning skills.

To help develop listening skills pairs can again be used. Each one of the pair has to tell the other two or three interesting things about him/herself. Each pair then has to introduce each other repeating the interesting things. Shopping list games can also be used to help listening. Each person has to remember the items suggested by others in the circle.

The Discussion

This can take various forms. The teacher should first remind the group about the agreed rules and then initiate a round of statements. Start off with non-controversial topics which will encourage participation. For example, "my favourite activity is..." or "being a friend means..." As the sessions continue the participants develop more confidence and will start to reveal more about themselves. The teacher should make sure that vulnerable participants are protected from put-downs. Starters such as, "the best day of my life was..." and "the worst day of my life..." can produce very revealing, and sometimes moving, contributions.

Solving Problems

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Circle time can be used to help solve problems which have been identified by either the teacher or the pupils. Problems and issues can be identified by brainstorming or by rounds such as, "the best thing about this school is..." and "the worst thing about this school is..." Try to make sure that if a real problem is identified at least one positive suggestion is agreed before the session ends. (e.g. "I will arrange for John and Sarah to have a meeting with the head teacher to discuss the toilets").

What has this got to do with Tackling Bullying?

Circle time has an important role to play in the prevention of bullying. It can help young people develop skills such as listening and empathising; it can promote respect for others and self-esteem; it is a forum within which the nature and effects of bullying can be considered; and it can be used to develop an anti-bullying code to which all members of the school community have contributed.

It can also be used to react to a particular problem. For example, if a particular group of youngsters is involved in bullying behaviour this could be openly discussed in the circle. Another example might be if a pupil is being socially excluded because of a perceived difference. A circle time discussion could be initiated which focused on an individual's right to be different. This could be done in such a way that it did not draw attention to the excluded individual but promoted reflection about the underlying causes of the isolation.

If circle time is only an isolated, spasmodic activity its value is greatly reduced. However, if its principles are incorporated into school policy and practised regularly it can make a fundamental difference to the ethos of a school. It will not completely stop bullying but it will help to involve pupils in implementation of school policy, bring more incidents into the open and encourage a more caring atmosphere. Pupils will start to apply the "no put-downs" rule outside the circle and will remind their peers - and sometimes their teachers - when this rule is broken.

Further information about Circle Time can be found in the Circle Time Resource Pack.

9 APPENDIX 2 - Intervention Strategies for use in Dealing With Bullying

9.1 BEFRIENDING

a) What is it?

Befriending involves assigning selected pupil volunteers to 'be with' or 'befriend' peers whom teachers have referred. Befrienders can be either Playground Friends (available to help any child who needs extra support) or Playground Buddies (child mentor for a particular pupil).

Befrienders:

- need friendly personal qualities
- give support with emotional and social problems - newness to a school, difficulty making friends, upset at separation or loss, being bullied or socially excluded
- offer companionship and activities to peers who would otherwise be miserable and alone
- may share a common difficulty - for example bereavement - perhaps setting up a support group

b) What are the benefits?

The befriended feel more positive about themselves having had someone to talk to about their problems. Befrienders feel more confident and value other people more. The school becomes safer and more caring as relationships improve generally.

9.2 THE SUPPORT GROUP APPROACH - FROM AGE 9 (NO BLAME APPROACH)

a) What is it?

A support group is formed for the bullied pupil made up of those involved in the bullying, and bystanders. Responsibility for change lies with the participants in the bullying. The first aim is to get the bully to identify with the victim, and the second to help resolve the problem. There are several steps:

- the group's facilitator chats with the victim and a support group of around 6-8 pupils is set up. As well as pupils involved in the bullying, friends of the victim can take part;
- with the victim's agreement, their own feelings are communicated to the group. The facilitator makes clear that the purpose is to take joint responsibility and find a solution. Suggestions on how to help are sought, but the key aim is a joint commitment to take action;
- each group member is interviewed individually a week later to review progress and report back on their contribution to resolving the problem. The bullied pupil is also interviewed. Whilst some group members might not have kept fully to their good intentions, the main criterion for success is that the bullying has stopped.

b) What are the benefits?

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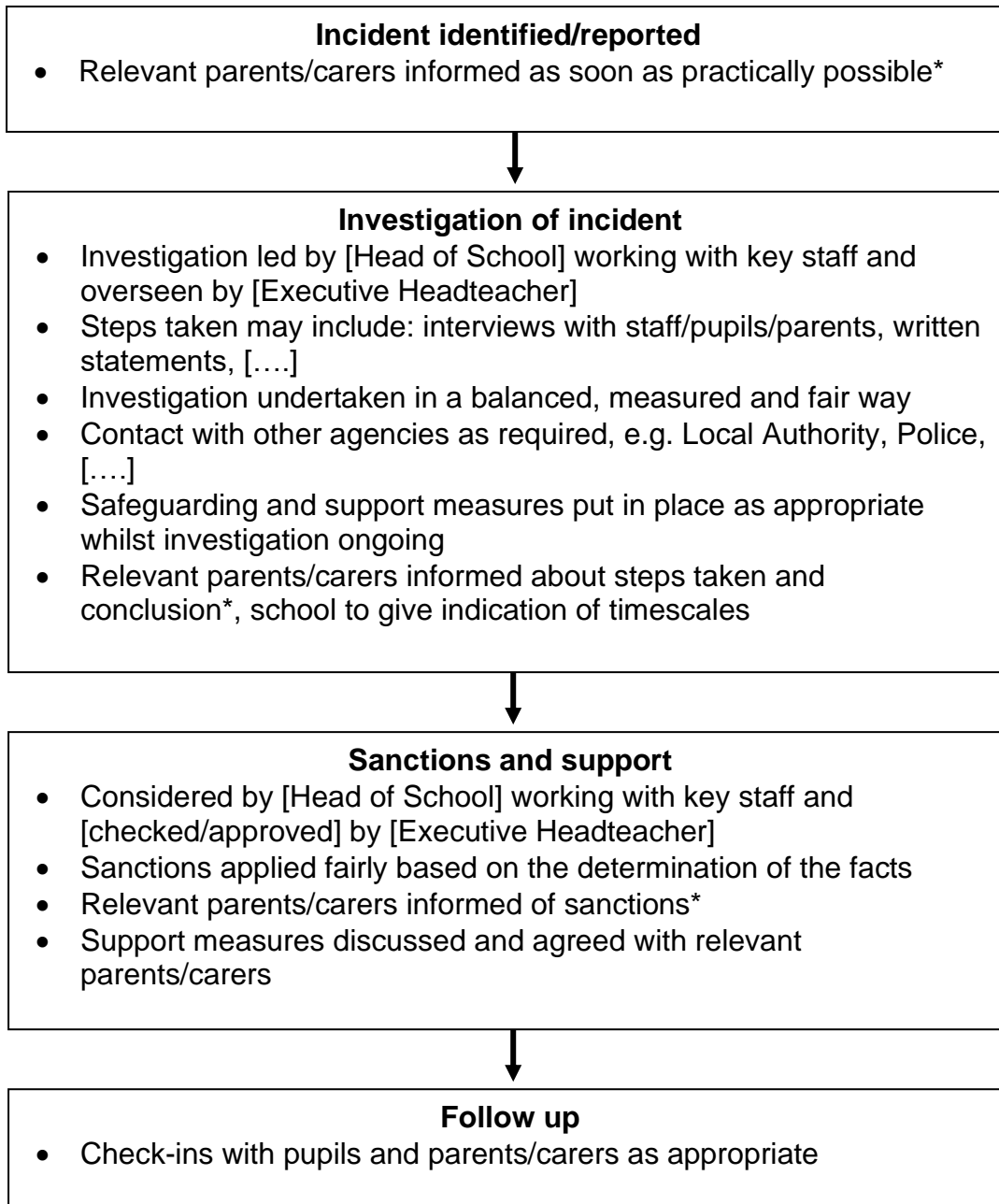
Over a two-year period, 80% of cases in primary schools were dealt with successfully without a delay by this method. In 14% of cases, three to five weekly reviews were needed before the bullying stopped. The victim continued to experience bullying only in 6% of cases. Results in secondary schools were similar.

10 APPENDIX 3 - Pro Forma for Reporting and Recording Bullying Incidents

| Class | Teacher | | Date |
|---|---------|------------------------------|------|
| Name of child being bullied. | | | |
| Details of the Bullying | | | |
| <p>Key Questions</p> <p>Who reported the incident?</p> <p>When and where did the bullying occur?</p> <p>What form does the bullying take?</p> <p>How often is it happening?</p> <p>Who is responsible?</p> <p>Are there any witnesses?</p> | | | |
| Date Headteacher informed. | | Date parents Informed | |
| Details of the action to be taken | | | |
| | | | |

| Review | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|--|
| Review Outcome | | Review Date | |
| | | | |
| Date Headteacher informed | | Date parents informed | |
| Follow up action with review dates. | | | |
| | | | |

11 APPENDIX 4 - Dealing with incidents involving violence, threatening behaviour or abuse



* Information shared is subject to confidentiality. Names of others involved and sanctions to them will not be shared - this detail is restricted to school staff and parents/carers of the perpetrator(s).

Sometimes investigations are complex and parents/carers are asked to be patient in receiving the conclusion. Parents/carers will not be able to scrutinise any of the evidence whilst the investigation is taking place.