

## **Bullying**

The effects of bullying can be huge and life-long. We are committed to creating a school environment where the children understand how to protect themselves from bullying in all its forms, both in person and over the internet.

We teach the children that bullying is wrong and that it is not tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to tackle bullying and we aim to keep Chowbent free of it in all its forms, be it children, staff or parent led.

Part of this is helping all to understand what is, and isn't, bullying. The Government clearly defines this for all schools. 'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally' DFE 2011.

Less serious friend fall-outs and one-off name calling would be dealt with within our pastoral and behavioural policies.

Bullying can take many forms for which we all need to be vigilant—Physical violence, psychological, verbal, exclusion, body language, threats, malicious gossip, extortion and cyber.

In school we ensure staff are trained and up to date on how to tackle bullying and spot it. We keep the children up to date on our policy and what to do if they feel they are being bullied.

At Chowbent we adopt Wigan Local Authority's 'Staged Seven Steps Approach to Anti-Bullying'. This runs alongside our usual sanctions outlined in this policy which would still be used. The stages below outline what has proven to be the most effective approach stopping bullying from reoccurring. Staff must proceed through the stages in order. Stage 1 must be carried out in a neutral stance by staff in order to maximise the chances of peer resolution. If this is not effective then later stages are invoked.

### **STAGE 1**

**Step one** - interview the victim once bullying has been identified. Ensure the victim's parents /carers are informed.

When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened s/he starts by talking to the victim about his/her feelings. S/he does not question him/her about the incidents but s/he does need to know who was involved.

**Step two** - Convene a meeting with the people involved

The teacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. We find that a group of six to eight young people works well. Staff will help the victim by enabling them to have a 'voice'.

**Step three** - explain the problem.

S/he tells them about the way the victim is feeling and might use a poem, piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise the distress. At no time does s/he discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group. It is important that this is not a review of incidents or anyone in the group is marginalised or portrayed as 'the bully'. This would reduce the chances of peer resolution. Staff must not attempt to shame or scaremonger the perpetrator(s) for the same reason.

**Step four** - share responsibility

The teacher does not attribute blame but states that s/he knows the group are responsible and can do something about it. Staff must keep peer resolution as their primary objective and not review or return to incidents that have occurred in the past. Responsibility can also take the form of speaking up when bullying behaviour is seen in others. This will challenge those who may have failed to act rather than acted negatively.

**Step five** - ask the group for their ideas.

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The teacher gives some positive responses but s/he does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

**Step six** - leave it up to them.

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over responsibility to the group to solve the problem, S/he 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 student individually, including the victim, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the young people involved in the process.

*Step seven is repeated periodically for several months. However if the problem re-occurs we move to stage 2.*

**STAGE 2**

Contact Parent(s) / Carer(s) of the bully

**STAGE 3**

Contact outside agencies e.g. Behaviour Support Team, Educational Psychologist, and Police.

**STAGE 4**

Pastoral Support Programme - possible fixed term exclusion.

All incidents of bullying are recorded and when we use the seven steps outlined above, records are kept of both the interventions and the outcomes by our learning mentor.

The school annually evaluates the effectiveness and impact of this policy as part of its annual cycle of school self-evaluation by the school's senior leadership.

The named member of staff responsible for tackling bullying in line with this policy is Mr. Randle

**The role of parents**

Parental support is essential if a school is to establish a fully effective behaviour policy. At Chowbent Primary we expect parents to work with us to help implement this policy. Working together we can create a safe and positive environment for all children.

We need to celebrate together the positive achievements of your children as much as report any areas of concern. We will therefore follow this policy to communicate to parent's good news whenever possible.

It is the policy of the school to inform parents if their child is involved in a fast track incident as soon as possible after the incident.

## **The role of staff**

Staff have a legal right to exercise certain legal powers in respect of this policy. Staff may search any pupil or their belongings if they have reasonable suspicion that In-appropriate items or materials are being brought into school. Children who have mobile phones are informed that these must be deposited in the school office at the start of the day and picked up at home time. Phones found not in the school office or being used in school time will be confiscated and parents will be asked to come to school to collect them.

The school staff may use reasonable force or make physical contact with children in matters of school discipline, if to not do so would cause harm to that child or another Person. School has powers to discipline children in school for misconduct beyond the school gate if the child is wearing a school uniform, travelling to or from school or taking part in school-organised or school related activities. This includes bullying off site including cyber-bullying. In line with government advice, the school will not automatically suspend a member of staff who has been accused of misconduct pending an investigation. The Headteacher will consult with the school governors and the local authority safeguarding board in order to make the appropriate decision regarding any suspension.