Pentland Primary School   Anti Bullying Policy

Legislation and Guidance

Under the 2010 Equality Act, schools must
- *"Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;*
- *Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and*
- *Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it."*

The **DfE statutory guidance "Keeping children safe in education"** (September 2020) states that emotional abuse may involve bullying (including cyberbullying) and requires that all staff be aware that children can also abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). It also states that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and that there is the potential them to be disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. Please refer to the school's Peer on Peer Policy.

The **DfE guidance "Preventing and tackling bullying** (July 2017)" states that every school must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying. "**Mental health and behaviour in schools**" (DfE November 2018) states that "bullying is a traumatic Adverse Childhood Experience and that clear policies on behaviour and bullying are key protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems."

What is Bullying?
Bullying is a form of peer on peer abuse. It has many definitions but most have three key features in common:

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

At Pentland, we define bullying as:

People doing nasty or unkind things to you on purpose, more than once, which are difficult to stop.

Bullying of children can take many forms but the main types are:

- *physical* – by being punched, pushed or hurt; made to give up money or belongings; having property, clothes or belongings damaged; forced to do something they don't want to do
- *verbal* – by being teased in a nasty way; called gay (whether or not it's true); insulted about their race, gender, religion, disability or special educational need; called names in other ways
- *indirect* – by having nasty stories told about them; being left out or excluded by other children or young people;
- *intimidation* – being threatened
- *cyberbullying* – for example, via mobile phones (text messages, calls), computers (emails, social media websites, chat room) and games consoles.

All, or any one of the five, can have a devastating effect on some children. Other children manage to ignore the hurt but it is important that as a school community we act to protect all children.

As a school community we believe that **bullying is totally unacceptable**. Every child has a right to attend school free from fear of violence or intimidation.

Bullying will only be stopped when the whole school community works together to report acts of bullying, prevent them reoccurring but, above all, create an atmosphere and ethos in the school where there is mutual respect and understanding of each other's feelings and actions.

Our aim is the elimination of bullying incidents and we will seek to achieve this by:

- making sure staff, children and parents know what is meant by bullying and discouraging it
  * parents and children will be provided with our definition of bullying
  * copy of Anti- Bullying policy made available to parents
  * work on bullying to be included in the PSHEe/C scheme of work

- encouraging children to report any incident of bullying, be they victims or observers
  * making children aware of whom they can report bullying to
  * using the STOP boxes located in school and thought boxes in class
  * investigating claims thoroughly to ascertain if bullying really has occurred
  * taking appropriate action where accusations of bullying are proved to be true
  * counselling children involved in bullying situations, to prevent a recurrence
  * involving outside support agencies with identified children, if bullying behaviour continues

- identifying the areas in school where bullying is more likely to occur and reducing its potential

- regularly evaluate the effectiveness of our anti-bullying processes

- use disciplinary sanctions to demonstrate how highly we value a non-bullying school

- regularly and openly discuss issues around bullying and track triggers eg. Race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability etc.

- provide staff with appropriate training

- work with the wider community

- make it easy to report bullying

- create an inclusive environment

- celebrate successes

Appropriate action

Each reported case of bullying will be investigated and appropriate action taken. Where sanctions are employed, they will be on an escalating scale if a child fails to modify his/her bullying behaviour after adult intervention.

However, if circumstances warrant it, higher level sanctions will be applied immediately. Parents will be informed if there is a repeat of bullying.
Exclusion will only be used as a last resort when all other strategies have failed.