

**Branton Community Primary School**  
**Breamish Valley Community Nursery**



**Anti-bullying**  
**Policy**

April 2015

Reviewed July 2017

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Statement of Principle

**Branton First School and Breamish Valley Nursery seek to provide a safe, secure and positive environment where:**

- Children and adults can achieve their potential, making full use of the opportunities available to them
- Children and adults have the right to have themselves and their property treated with respect and to be free from intimidation.

**The School seeks to protect these basic human rights by ensuring that those acting on their behalf:**

- Are proactive in setting up a range of preventative measures.
- Actively listen to children, young people, where appropriate their parents or carers and members of staff.

## Clarification of terms

**Bullying** is repeated action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally.

**Cyber bullying** can be defined as the use of information and communications technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone.

**Racially motivated bullying** includes actions where this motivation is perceived by the victim to be so motivated.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying may be defined as the abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour which may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It is repeated over a period of time on those who feel powerless to resist with the intention of causing distress.

Bullying should always be taken seriously.

All bullying is unacceptable.

Bullying does not only occur between children. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and children.

In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a child or a child abuses their power over another child, bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be treated as such. (See Child Protection Policy)

Bullying is deliberately hurtful. It typically has seven elements:-

1. an initial desire to hurt
2. the desire is expressed in action
3. someone is hurt either physically or emotionally
4. there is an imbalance of power
5. it is without justification
6. it is typically repeated
7. there is evident enjoyment by those who bully

Bullying can also stem from thoughtlessness, such as in name calling or stem from institutionalised attitudes, for example in relation to gender or race.

That does not make it any less unacceptable. Bullying can typically take three forms:

1. **Physical bullying** hitting, kicking, taking belongings
2. **Verbal bullying** name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
3. **Indirect bullying** spreading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups.

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics. However, pupils can be called names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation or some form of disability.

The use of mobile phones to text insulting, obscene or threatening messages is both verbal and indirect bullying.

**Cyber bullying** can be defined as the use of information and communications technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone. (See E-safety policy)

Bullying is always significant to the person being bullied.

## **Bullying by race, gender, sexual orientation or disability-**

### **Racist Bullying**

Following the Stephen Lawrence incident, the 1999 MacPherson report defines racist bullying as

“any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”

A child or young person may be targeted for representing a group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group.

Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery / mimicry
- Physical aggression or threats
- Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation's premises
- Racist inciting of others
- Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs
- A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play

For further information and guidance consult the Northumberland County Council anti-racism policy

### **Sexual Bullying**

Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material
- Graffiti with sexual content

In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would normally be involved as these are criminal offences.

## **Sexual Orientation**

Pupils do not have to be lesbian, gay or bi-sexual to experience this type of bullying. In most cases being different can be enough. Factors hindering schools in challenging homophobic bullying include staff inexperience and parental disapproval.

## **Disabilities**

Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children and young people may not be able to articulate their experiences.

## **Recognising Bullying and its Effects**

A recent survey showed that bullying in schools is widespread. Although bullying can occur on journeys to and from school, most takes place in school. Research shows that 75% of bullying in primary schools takes place in the playground.

Both boys and girls bully and can bully as individuals or as members of a group. Children who bully others come from any kind of social or cultural background. Adult bullying of children also occurs and is equally unacceptable. Bullying always creates inequalities and is damaging to all those involved.

The person being bullied, the person who bullies and those who witness or know about the bullying are all affected in some way. Those who bully can experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties.

Research evidence has shown that those who bully are more likely to engage in anti-social activities and have a greater prevalence of poor mental health. A child or young person could have experienced both being bullied and having bullied others. Bullying is not a natural part of growing up and should never be accepted as such. Those who bully may show aggression through for example, poor control of impulsive actions, a positive view of violence or a desire to dominate. They may exhibit anxiety through for example low self-esteem or difficulties in making friends. They may be easily led in joining in bullying or in standing by whilst bullying takes place.

Those who bully may experience difficulty in admitting what they have done; be reluctant to admit that what they have done is wrong; suppress feelings of

guilt; feel no remorse and repeat the hurtful action, especially if this goes unchallenged.

Those who are bullied may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and feel that they have done something to attract the bullying. Any child or young person can be bullied.

Those who are being bullied may experience:

- Unhappiness
  - A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation
  - Reduced self-esteem and self-worth
  - Poor academic performance
  - Exclusion from normal social experience
  - A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting
  - A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide
- Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:
- Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities
  - Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building
  - Fear of walking to school or of using public transport
  - Underachievement
  - Books or clothes destroyed
  - Possessions and money going missing
  - Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
  - Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and / or aggressive
  - Stammering
  - Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions
  - A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints, headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns
  - A marked change in well-established patterns of behaviour

Those who are bullied are often reluctant to say what is wrong or to seek help.

## **Strategies and Procedures for Dealing with Bullying in School**

- Ensure that the environment is well supervised
- Deal promptly with incidents
- Ensure a calm and consistent approach from staff
- Ensure the immediate safety and well-being of those being bullied
- Record all incidents of bullying and report to Headteacher for monitoring purposes
- Ensure that both adults and children have a clear understanding of different types of bullying – and what the policy is for dealing with this
- Regularly review the school's approach to anti-bullying with staff
- Develop skills in strategies for staff to use to prevent bullying and to deal with incidents
- Offer confidentiality and appropriate advice to pupils as required
- Recognise and consistently challenge sexual, racist and homophobic content within verbal abuse – check understanding of usage.
- Engage with events such as the national 'Anti-bullying week' (next is November 2017), Safer Internet Day (February each year)
- Use role play and assertiveness training
- Explore and rejoice in differences and diversity through a wide range of events in and out of the curriculum
- Use whole school assemblies, circle time and class PHSE lessons to address bullying issues.
- Explore sexism and sexual bullying through the curriculum, as appropriate
- Use single sex groupings to explore sensitive issues, particularly with older children
- Use peer mediation to resolve conflict
- Children and young people should be listened to carefully and opportunities should be made available for them to express their views and opinions
- Pupils encouraged to understand that "It's OK to tell"
- Involve parents and the wider community in the decision of what action will be taken – for example, through Parent Surveys and working groups
- Explore multi-agency working to support the implementation of the anti-bullying policy – for example, with the Behaviour Support Service

It is also important to be aware of problems that may occur on the way to and from school – steps can be taken to deal with specific problems as appropriate.

### **Preventative Work**

The prevention of bullying in school is clearly preferable to dealing with incidents. We have high expectations of behaviour at Branton Primary School and Breamish Valley Nursery, recognised in the Ofsted report of March 2013.

To ensure that our pupils and staff have a good understanding of the difficulties that bullying can create, a range of education, training and experiences are used.

For example:

- Planned curriculum activities
- Responses to specific incidents through curriculum activities and circle time
- Assemblies and visiting speakers
- Whole school focus weeks (anti bullying week)
- Drama and story telling
- Training for support staff on emotional wellbeing and supporting children with learning and behavioural difficulties
- Training for all staff on Emotional Literacy
- Access to Behaviour Support and Psychological Services – and preventative work from them

At Branton Primary School and Breamish Valley Nursery have a legal responsibility to prevent and tackle bullying. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 came into force on 10 September 2011. The act means that public bodies have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, and in delivering services as well as in relation to their own employees. It also requires that public bodies:

- have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

It may also be useful to cross refer to the following school policies:

- Child Protection (Reviewed annually latest Nov 2016)
- Inclusion (July 2017)
- Accessibility and Equality (April 2016)
- Special Educational Needs (Reviewed annually, Sept 2016)
- Teaching and Learning (January 2017)

## **Review**

We acknowledge that this policy and our understanding of bullying and the prevention of bullying need to be current and up to date in order for our strategies to be successful. The head teacher and staff will review this policy during summer term 2017. Any suggested amendments will be presented to the governing body.

This policy is based on the Anti-bullying Policy from Amble First School

Signed ..... Chair of Governors

Signed ..... Headteacher

This policy will be reviewed by summer 2017

Review date 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Next review by Summer Term 2019