Gatton Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Gatton School adopts the bullying definition from the Anti-Bullying Alliance, who base the definition on three key criteria.

*"The **repetitive**, **intentional** **hurting** of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace."*

This policy also references "No place for bullying: How schools create a positive culture and prevent and tackle bullying" (June 2012), "Preventing and tackling bullying" (July 2017) as well as "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (September 2026).

1.2. Bullying is wrong and damaging. It causes much suffering and can have long term negative effects on its victims. It takes many forms: verbal, physical, and emotional and 'cyber'. It is the antitheses of the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed (peace & blessings be upon him). His character which is the example Muslims aspire to emphasised care and consideration for all. Talking ill of someone in their absence is considered blameworthy let alone direct emotional or physical forms. Therefore, our policy is couched in an environment that aspires to teach students to be of outstanding character whilst realising that people can fall into negative behaviour from time to time.

1.3. The school is aware that often a bully is or has been the victim of bullying him/herself. We realise that a bully may have unresolved emotional issues that need to be addressed as the root causes of the unacceptable behaviour. This includes the possibility that this could be due to issues emanating from the home. Therefore, to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We realise that a bully is another child that needs our guidance, support and direction as much as the victim of the bullying.

1.4. Our approach to the prevention and management of bullying is set out in policy

1.5. The school recognises that bullying normally takes three forms:

Physical – hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, scratching, spitting or any other form of physical attack. Damage to or taking someone else's belongings may also constitute physical bullying.

Verbal – offensive name calling, insults, racist remarks, sexist or homophobic jokes, teasing, threats, using sexually suggestive or abusive language.

Indirect (Social and Cyber) - spreading nasty stories/rumours about someone, intimidation, exclusion from social groups.

1.6. The school also recognises that bullying can be of specific type and based on prejudice and difference. Many children are bullied because they are seen to be 'different'. This is usually referred to as prejudice-driven bullying. It may be that your child is seen as different because of their race, religion or culture, because of their sexuality, because of their gender, or because of any special educational needs or disabilities they may have.

1.7. **Bullying based on gender and sexual orientation**

This is directed towards young people who are openly gay, bisexual, are perceived as gay, or show characteristics often associated with the opposite gender. When heterosexual young people are subjected to homophobic bullying they can be less reluctant to report it, as this may reinforce the stereotypical way that they are already viewed by others. The bullying is often verbal, but can also be physical, and in serious cases constitutes assault, leading to investigation by the police. Harassment of a homophobic nature tends to be carried out by groups of people, and occurs often, even daily. Name calling, such as calling someone/something 'gay', begins in the primary school, although homophobic bullying overall is more common in adolescence.

1.8. **Bullying based on race, religion and culture**

Racist violence, harassment and abuse are closely related to, and sometimes difficult to distinguish from bullying. Racist bullying can range from ill-considered remarks, which are not intended to be hurtful, to deliberate physical attacks causing serious injury. Racist bullying can be identified by the motivation of the bully, the language used, and by the fact that victims are singled out because of the colour of their skin, the way they talk, their ethnic grouping or by their religious or cultural practices.

Bullying based on disability

We know that children are more likely to be bullied when they arvulnerable. Mencap research (taken from http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help_and_advice/Pages/How_bullying_happens.aspx) shows children with disabilities/special needs are three times more likely than their peers to be bullied. People's assumptions and prejudices about disability can make disabled children more vulnerable to bullying for a number of reasons, such as:

Negative attitudes towards disability.
A lack of understanding of different disabilities and conditions.
Being seen as “different”.
Not recognising that they are being bullied.
They may be doing different work or have additional support at school.
They may be more isolated due to their disability.
They may have difficulties in telling people about bullying.
They may find it harder to make friends.

1.9. The school recognises that technology plays an important and positive role in children’s lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly. The topic of e-safety has been managed via the school’s curriculum. In addition, there are parental workshops that the school will endeavour to organise to support parents to help keep their children safe in a Digital world. Nevertheless, one of the negative consequences is ‘**Cyber bullying’**. This is the use of ICT, commonly a mobile phone or the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying; an extension of face-to-face bullying.
It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people.
It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted
It can draw bystanders into being accessories
It includes: threats and intimidation; harassment or ‘cyber-stalking’;
Vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation;
Unauthorised publication of private information or images (‘happy-slapping’); and manipulation

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1. Gatton School tries to do all it can to prevent bullying. We strive to develop a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable and a procedural policy that deals effectively with any incidents of bullying that may occur from time to time despite our positive behaviour inclined environment.

2.2. We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, an environment in which bullying cannot thrive.

2.3. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

2.4. We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our approach to bullying and we make clear each person's responsibilities in dealing with incidents of bullying.

2.5. This policy embodies all the requirements detailed in the DfES Anti-Bullying document, 'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools'

3. The Role of the Board of Governors

3.1. The board of governors supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the board of governors does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

3.2. The board of governors monitors cases of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy periodically. The governors require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to them on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

3.3. The board of governors responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the board of governors notifies the headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the board.

4. The Role of the Headteacher

4.1. It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of and implement the school anti-bullying policy to know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports to the board of governors about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

4.2. The headteacher also ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if a case is established, the headteacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with children why this behaviour is wrong and the consequences of it for the victim and the bully.

4.3. The headteacher ensures that all staff members receive sufficient training to implement the school's anti-bullying strategy.

4.4. The headteacher sets the schools standard for acceptable behaviour. Mutual support, trust, respects and praise is encouraged as is the awareness of each child's role as an accountable member of the school community. Praise, reward and celebrating the success of all children is used to create an environment in which bullying cannot thrive.

4.5. The headteacher may also provide support to the bully him/herself. Bullies are often victims of bullying at some point previously in their lives. This support may take the form of discussions, circle time and involve parents, friends and external agencies.

4.6. The headteacher will direct the designated safeguarding lead, to refer children whose bullying may be due to other mitigating factors from the home, to report this as a safeguarding issue.

5. The Role of the Anti-Bullying Coordinator

5.1. The Anti-Bullying Coordinator at present is Shihara Afzel (Assistant Head)

5.2. All incidents of bullying reported to him/her by members of staff or parents must be placed on the pupil data management system (CPOMS). The Anti-Bullying co-ordinator also ensures that the anti-bullying procedure is understood and followed by teachers.

5.3. The headteacher is responsible for sanctioning a child found to be bullying others. Sanctions for bullying include internal exclusions, suspension and expulsion. The level of sanction is determined by the seriousness of the bullying involved.

5.4. The Anti-Bullying Coordinator will periodically attend training to refresh and inform their knowledge of best practise in this area and that of behaviour management.

5.5. The Anti-Bullying Coordinator will liaise with teachers over the details of The Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT) Strategy and help in counselling the victim and the bully. The counselling may be provided by other adults in the school as deemed appropriate. They also liaise with the headteacher in deciding appropriate sanctions.

6. The Role of the Teacher

6.1. Teachers receive induction when they join the school to familiarise them with the school's anti-bullying strategy.

6.2. Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By raising awareness of each child's role as an accountable member of the school community and by praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to create an environment in which bullying cannot thrive.

6.3. Teachers can often be the last to know that bullying is taking place. However, they should endeavour to monitor playground behaviour through observations, feedback from other staff members, talking to children and completing friendship questionnaires every term to identify or pre-empt cases of bullying.

6.4. Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene when possible to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep records of all incidents that happen involving their own pupils and those that they witness in the school in the anti-bullying log kept in the head teacher's office. In addition, established incidents of bullying are recorded in the pupil file of the child carrying out the bullying.

6.5. If a child or parent approaches a teacher with concerns that a child is being bullied, the teacher must invoke this anti-bullying policy at once. The teacher must report the claim within a day to the anti-bullying/behaviour management co-ordinator.

6.6. The anti-bullying coordinator/ teacher must investigate the claims within ten days of the claims being made. This must be done by taking witness reports from witnesses to specific acts of bullying that are alleged to have taken place. Recent events must be included. Reports must be verified by checking the stories with other witnesses. In the case of cyber-bullying screen prints and other similar methods may be used to gather evidence of alleged bullying. **However, no inappropriate images of children will be kept by the school for any purpose as this is illegal.**

6.4 When teachers establish a case of bullying, they log the incident on CPOMS (A pupil data management system) and inform the Anti-Bullying coordinator. Teachers must also employ the Anti-Bullying Circle-Time Strategy (ABCT Strategy) within a week.

After consultation with the headteacher, the Anti-Bullying coordinator/teacher must also inform the victim's parents within a day and set up a meeting within a week to discuss the steps the school will take. The teacher must also continue to liaise closely with parents to

support the child, communicating with them through meetings, letters or phone calls until the bullying is resolved to their satisfaction.

6.5 Perpetrators of bullying will be counselled by the Anti-Bullying co-ordinator and their teacher and disciplined by the headteacher. Further incidents or behaviour of concern should be highlighted to the Anti-Bullying Coordinator. These forms should ultimately be kept in the child's individual record. The parents of the child found to be bullying must be told about their child's behaviour and called into school to discuss how they can help the school in correcting their child's behaviour. This should take place within a week of establishing the bullying.

6.6 If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying children, his/her parents will be invited to the school to discuss the situation further. Behavioural targets will be defined and appropriate strategies discussed to help the child learn desirable behaviour, through a behaviour modification programme. Parents' help in reinforcing the school's stance on acceptable behaviour will be sought. In difficult cases, for example where these discussions have proven ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies such as social services if needed. The school may resort to suspension and expulsion in particular cases that do not improve despite reasonable intervention.

6.7 The ABCT Strategy - This is an anti-bullying circle time strategy taken by a member of staff relatively unknown to a class. It aims to eradicate a case of bullying by making pupils take account of the consequences of their own actions.

All the children in each class are made to step into the shoes of the victim by listening to detailed accounts of the victim's feelings without being told who the victim is. Once they have empathised with the victim and understood that the behaviour causing those feelings and experiences is wrong they are told who the victim is in order to "humanise" the victim in their eyes and understand that just as it is bad for themselves or their best friend or a stranger to be bullied and made to feel awful, it is equally bad for the actual victim to have been made to feel this way.

They are then pushed to take responsibility for the bullying by being accused by the teacher taking the ABCT Strategy as complicit to the bullying because they did nothing to prevent it or did nothing to help the victim or they may have participated in some acts of bullying themselves.

After this, they are asked to consider how they can repair the situation and help heal the victim and the bully. This is a brain-storming session and its conclusions must be summed up and put on display as "promises" of how everyone will solve the problem and eradicate the bullying from then on.

7. The Role of Parents

7.1. Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

7.2. Parents are a crucial component in the success of all school endeavours. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's code of conduct and anti-bullying policy. We rely on their reinforcement of our common values at home to nurture future citizens of society that have a strong sense of personal accountability. We ask parents to actively encourage their child to be a well-behaved member of the school who feels responsible for his/her own behaviour and tries hard to do good towards others in fulfilment of his/her being a good Muslim.

7.3. The school will communicate with the parent body through its termly newsletter and its regular letters home on the issue of bullying and behaviour management, to keep parents in touch with school policy and behaviour expectations and the role of parents in achieving high standards of behaviour.

8. Bullying of staff by others

8.1 The school also recognises that teachers and other staff can be victims of bullying and intimidation from parents and other staff members. The school has separate guidance for teachers to refer to should they feel they are victims of bullying under the school Grievance policy.

9. Monitoring and Review

9.1. The implementation of this policy is monitored by the headteacher, who reports to the governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request

9.2. This anti-bullying policy is the responsibility of the board of governors and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's anti-bullying logbook and through discussion with the headteacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.