

# BROMET PRIMARY SCHOOL

## DEALING WITH BULLYING POLICY

### Definition

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. Bullying can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical intimidation, assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident that casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.'

Staff, parents and children at Bromet School work together to create a happy, caring and safe learning environment for everyone. Bullying, whether verbal, physical or indirect, is not tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to try to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Research has shown, repeatedly, that the extent of bullying in schools is greatly underestimated.

The victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people may bring bullying to the attention of any member of staff.

### Aims

- ◆ To provide a safe, caring environment for the whole school community, especially the children in our care.
- ◆ To instil in children that bullying is unacceptable and that reports of bullying will be taken seriously, recorded and acted upon.
- ◆ To reassure children that they will be listened to and will know that it is all right to tell.
- ◆ To heed parents and keep them informed of actions taken in response to a complaint.
- ◆ A full investigation will follow any report of bullying with detailed records kept of incidents, reports and complaints.
- ◆ To take appropriate action, including exclusion in cases of severe bullying.
- ◆ To monitor incidents of bullying during the school year by headteacher.

### Strategy for Dealing with Bullying

In dealing with bullying, all staff at Bromet School follow these fundamental guidelines.

- ◆ Never ignore suspected bullying.
- ◆ Do not make premature assumptions.
- ◆ Listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils with the same version do not mean they are telling the truth.
- ◆ Adopt a problem-solving approach that moves pupils forward from self-justification.
- ◆ Follow up proven cases to check bullying has not returned.
- ◆ Keep detailed records.

Strategies have been introduced at Bromet School to reduce bullying. These strategies cover raising awareness about bullying and the Anti-bullying Policy, increased understanding for victims and teaching pupils how to manage relationships in a constructive way.

Staff should apply one or more of the strategies below, depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis should always be one of showing a caring and listening approach.

In response to a complaint of bullying, the discipline procedures of Bromet School should be followed, with staff making a full investigation, keeping detailed records and applying sanctions as necessary.

**The Head Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will follow these procedures:-**

1. Discuss the nature of the bullying with the 'victim' at length, recording all the facts. This will require patience and understanding.
2. Identify the bully/bullies and any witnesses.
3. Interview witnesses.
4. Discuss the incident(s) with the alleged bully/ies. Confront them with the allegations and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that this is only an investigation at this stage.
5. If the bully owns up, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable at Bromet School and what effect it has on the education of the victim and the rest of the children in the class/school. Apply sanctions relevant to the type of bullying.
6. If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further. If there is sufficient evidence that the bullying occurred, apply relevant sanctions.
7. Hold separate discussions with parents of bully and victim.
8. Sanctions for the bully include:
  - Withdrawal from favoured activities, for example school visit
  - Loss of play times [see behaviour sanctions]
  - Barred from school during lunchtimes for an agreed period
  - Fixed period of exclusion from school.
9. Provide a Pastoral Support Programme for the victim with a mentor or named person the victim is happy with monitoring and observing at break times and lunchtimes, and through discussion to make sure there is no repetition.
10. Provide a Pastoral Support Programme for the bully. This will include a Behaviour Support Programme and opportunities in circle time or groups for the child/ren to discuss relationships, feelings and the effect bullying can have on individuals. A mentor/named person the bully is happy with will support the child during this programme.

In order to reduce incidents of bullying and recognise bullies, at Bromet School all staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils. We listen, believe and act.

Older children who are play leaders are there as a child's first contact point, if they feel they cannot tell an adult. There are ten in all. These are children in Year 6 and the children may talk to the head boy or girl and class representatives who sit on the Children's Council.

'Worry boxes' are placed in every classroom into which children can put written notes if they fear reprisals should they speak openly about bullying.

There are posters on notice boards advertising how children can report bullying and dissuading children from bullying. The Childline and DfE Bullying website addresses are displayed prominently.

**Bullying off the School Premises**

Bromet School is not directly responsible for bullying off the school premises; however, if both the victim and the bully are from Bromet School action will be taken as if the incident has occurred within the school, and this includes informing parents.

Where possible, Bromet School will support pupils, who have been bullied, especially on their way to or from school, by pupils from another school or by other persons.

The following steps should be taken.

- ◆ Talk to the pupil(s) and parents involved from the other school.
- ◆ Talk to the Head Teacher of another school whose pupils are bullying off school premises.
- ◆ Talk to the Police about problems on the local streets.

- ◆ Talk to the local transport company, if bullying is occurring on school buses.
- ◆ Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying situations.

### **Bullying Directed Towards Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation or Disability**

Bromet School will not tolerate bullying against anyone because of his or her race, gender, sexual orientation or disability. The school will take preventative action to reduce the likelihood of bullying incidents of this nature occurring. Stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others, whether arising from race, gender, ability or disability.

### **Racial Bullying/Harassment**

Racial bullying will not be tolerated in Bromet School and will be treated severely. If a child receives verbal abuse, physical threats or attacks, or if a pupil brings racist literature into school, incites others to behave in a racist way or writes racist insults, the strategies in the Policy for Education for Ethnic Diversity will be implemented.

A full investigation will be carried out, recording incidents in a separate incident book and on LEA forms. Bromet School has a duty to develop children's understanding of ethnic diversity issues and explore racial tolerance in PSHE and Citizenship lessons and in Religious Education lessons.

Bromet School guarantees confidentiality and support for those being bullied. Racial incidents are reported to the Governing Body, LEA and police as required.

### **Sexual Bullying**

Sexual bullying has an impact on both genders. A sexual assault will lead to the exclusion of the perpetrator from Bromet School. Sexual bullying is characterised by abusive name-calling, comments about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty, inappropriate and uninvited touching, sexual innuendoes and propositions (i.e. sexual harassment), and, in its extreme form, sexual assault or rape.

Bromet Schools' strategies to deal with sexual bullying include:

- ◆ Recording incidents in a separate incident book
- ◆ Developing understanding of gender relations
- ◆ Exploring sexism and sexual bullying in PSHE lessons
- ◆ Using single-sex groups to discuss sensitive issues
- ◆ Ensuring the school site is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable
- ◆ Implementing appropriate discipline procedures as appropriate.

### **Sexual Orientation**

Sexual bullying can also be related to sexual orientation. Children do not have to be homosexual or bi-sexual to experience such bullying.

Strategies to deal with such bullying include:

- ◆ Recording incidents in a separate incident book
- ◆ Awareness by staff that homophobic bullying can occur
- ◆ Challenging homophobic language and explore pupils' understanding – they might not understand the impact
- ◆ Guaranteeing confidentiality and support for those being bullied
- ◆ Implement discipline procedures if the bullying warrants it.

### **Special Education Needs or Disabilities**

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities might not be able to articulate experiences as fluently as other children. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific disability.

Bromet School makes sure the behaviour of staff does not trigger bullying unintentionally. They should avoid undue attention towards SEN children compared with others, and should not make comments based on pupils' appearance or perceived character e.g. boys playing football poorly should not be told they play like girls.

We try to make classroom activities and lessons sensitive to such children's needs. We teach assertiveness and other social skills and teach victims to say 'No' or to get help. A named mentor/friend is appointed for the pupil to confide in.

If the bullying is serious, Bromet School undertakes a full investigation, including a full discussion with witnesses, recording incidents in the incident book and contacting parents. Discipline procedures are implemented.

High attainers, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Teachers will treat this as seriously as any other type of bullying.

## Further information

### Useful Documents and Resources

CSIE	Index for Inclusion 2000: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools
CRE	Learning for All – Standards for Racial Equality in Schools 2000
DfEE	The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils (Circular 10/98)
DfEE/Home Office	Social Inclusion: Pupil Support 10/99
DfEE/ Home Office	School Security: Dealing with Troublemakers 1997
Ofsted	Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils 1999
Scottish Council for Education Research	Second SCRE Anti-bullying Pack 1993
The Stationery Office	Bullying – Don't Suffer in Silence (Circular 0064/2000) An Anti-bullying Pack for Schools
The Stationery Office	Discipline in schools: Report of the Committee of Enquiry Chaired by Lord Elton 1989 (Reprinted 1997)

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