

Thomas Coram Centre and Nursery School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Thomas Coram Centre
and Nursery School
49 Mecklenburgh Square
London WC1N 2NY



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Reviewed bi-annually	

1. Introduction

1.1 Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all children and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Similarly, bullying behaviour by an adult towards any pupil, staff or parent will not be tolerated.

1.2 Objectives of this Policy

To ensure that:

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/carers know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

2. Definition *

Bullying is a deliberate act done to cause distress solely to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully.

It is regular and ongoing.

*While Thomas Coram Nursery School fully accepts the above definition of bullying we feel it is important to note that this is not always an appropriate description for the behaviour of children aged under five due to their typical level of social and emotional development.

Children of this age may deliberately hurt another child physically or emotionally without understanding the impact of this behaviour on the other person. We apply this policy with this consideration in mind.

Bullying can take many forms and can be short term or continue over years. It can take the form of physical, verbal or psychological attack of a more subtle nature. It can occur between children, and between adults and pupils. It generally falls into one or a combination of the following categories:

- *Physical*: unprovoked assault on a person or group including pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, any form of violence.
- *Psychological*: reduction of a person's self-esteem or confidence through threatening behaviour, taunting or teasing about race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, family circumstances, appearance, or any other feature of their lives which can be used to wound them.
- *Social*: Ostracism/ rejection by peer group.
- *Verbal*: Using language in a derogatory or offensive manner, such as name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- *Other* - could include interference with personal property, extortion etc...

In addition to children bullying each other, bullying in schools can take place between adults and pupils and between adults.

2.1 Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

3. Prevention

3.1 Context

Bullying occurs at every school. We believe that establishing and maintaining an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to is vital for the prevention of bullying. This means ensuring that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty. Also, we include activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from bullying.

3.2 The Role of the Governors

- The governing body supports the head teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.
- The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the head teacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.
- A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can follow the School's Complaints Procedure. The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the head teacher, and asks him/her to conduct an

investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

3.3 The Role of the Head teacher

- It is the responsibility of the head teacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The head teacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.
- The head teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong. The head teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the key person may decide to use group time as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and how we can work together to avoid it happening again.
- The head teacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.
- The head teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

3.4 The role of the teacher and support staff

- All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.
- If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will refer it to the head teacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the head teacher, the headteacher informs the child's parents.
- We also record incidents that occur near the school, or on the children's way between school and home.
- Any adult who witnesses an act of bullying will be required to record it and the school will maintain the log.
- When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This will involve support for the victim. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the head teacher. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more

extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the head teacher may contact external support agencies, such as the Behaviour Support team or social services.

- All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.
- Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., to help pupils understand the feelings of all children. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

3.5 The role of parents

- 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. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the head teacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed on our website.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

3.6 The role of pupils

- Children are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.
- Children are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

3.7 Whole School Ethos

We are committed to providing children with the relevant social skills and understanding which will lessen the opportunities in which bullying may occur. However, where bullying does occur, we are dedicated to providing a positive outcome for all parties involved. This whole school approach is apparent in our planning, ethos, curriculum provision, and in the implementation of our behaviour policy.

This is what we do to prevent bullying:

- have a set of clear school rules which prohibit bullying
- encourage the children to have respect for others
- show and tell the children what kind of behaviour we expect
- ensure that staff model good behaviour and communication skills, with pupils and adults in the school

- reward good behaviour
- value each child as an individual
- talk about bullying behaviour
- encourage children to talk and listen
- practice ways of expressing our feelings and sorting our problems
- take all reports of bullying behaviour seriously
- listen to parents and carers
- monitor places where bullying may occur
- work to improve playtimes and playgrounds

4. Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

5. Procedures

5.1 Procedures to follow when bullying is reported

We believe that when bullying occurs not only is the child who is being bullied a victim, but also the child who is doing the bullying. We believe that children who bully do so for a reason and that unless we attempt to understand the reason in each case, we are unlikely to successfully solve the problem.

We believe that establishing and maintaining an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to is vital for the prevention of bullying. This means ensuring that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

If a child is being bullied, or if a friend or adult suspects that they are being bullied:

1. Report bullying incidents to staff. The first person to talk to would be the key person although any member of staff that the child or parent/carer feels comfortable with can be approached.
2. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated by the member of staff informed or passed on to a more appropriate member of staff for investigation if necessary, and the bullying stopped quickly.
3. In serious cases, all parents/carers will be informed and may be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullied child will be supported to ensure that they recover from the incident.
6. The bully/bullies will be supported in order to understand why they are bullying and to help them to change their behaviour.

5.2 Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) will be asked to say sorry. We will always attempt to reconcile children involved.
2. Other consequences for the bully may take place depending on the seriousness of the problem.
3. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

6. Monitoring and review

6.1 This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the head teacher.

6.2 The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness bi-annually. Governors will analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist, sexist or homophobic bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

6.3 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.

7. Help Organisations

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	020 7354 8321
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222

Bullying Online

www.bullying.co.uk

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.