



## Anti-Bullying Policy

*This policy is based on discussions with teaching staff in this and other schools, a review of similar documents from other schools and relevant organisations (e.g. DCFS, SAFEchild, etc.).*

*The policy is reviewed annually.*

*ECM: Be healthy, Enjoy & achieve*

We believe that challenging bullying effectively will improve the safety and happiness of our pupils, demonstrate that the school cares and make clear to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable at South Lee School.

Background:

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

- deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- repeated often over a period of time
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against

The various types of bullying may include:

- physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, etc.
- through the use of technology: mobile phones, e-mails, etc.,

Usually, one pupil starts to bully a victim. Often, others are also present.

These may:

- help the bully by joining in
- help the bully by watching, laughing and shouting encouragement
- remain totally uninvolved
- help the victim directly, tell the bullies to stop, or fetch an adult

Any child can be bullied. The following factors may make bullying more likely:

- lacking close friends in school
- being shy
- an over-protective family environment
- being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- being different in some other respect
- behaving inappropriately
- intruding or being a ‘nuisance’

Rationale:

Though incidences at South Lee are relatively rare, we view bullying as a very serious issue. All staff, parents and pupils must be aware that bullying will not be tolerated and we shall make every effort to ensure that bullies are dealt with appropriately.

Aim:

The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to clarify for all members of South Lee School that bullying is always unacceptable. All pupils have the right to be happy at school and should feel safe. We aim to reduce incidents of bullying and encourage a climate of positive support so that pupils realise that bullying is unacceptable. All pupils are encouraged to inform someone if they are being bullied. Pupils must be confident that they will be listened to, that incidents shall be investigated and that appropriate action shall be taken thereafter.

#### Staff action:

1. Listen to all the pupils involved.
2. Hear both sides.
3. Ask for witnesses and question them.
4. Record all incidents in the appropriate file.
5. Protect all children from violence.
6. Be firm.
7. Agree that all forms of bullying are unacceptable.
8. If in doubt, seek advice.
9. Never promise to keep information confidential.
10. Encourage pupils to talk to someone about their problem.

#### Dealing with bullying

##### The victim:

- Listen to and reassure the pupil that the school will do all it can to help them
- Try to give them the confidence to tell you exactly what has happened
- Explain that revenge is not an appropriate response
- Deal with the incident yourself, initially, and complete an incident form (ask a colleague for help if you are unsure of what to do)
- Pass the completed form on to the Head or Deputy Head (Pastoral)
- Explain that we shall talk with the bully and try to help them to modify his/her behaviour
- Give continued support to the pupil concerned and check at a later date that bullying is not continuing

##### The bully:

- Make the child aware that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Explain clearly and precisely what behaviour is causing distress to the victim
- Make the child aware of the consequences if bullying continues
- Discuss ways in which the child must change his/her behaviour
- Make notes of what action you have taken
- Inform the Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or House Tutor of any action taken
- Monitor the child's behaviour over the next few weeks

#### The school curriculum

Where appropriate the school curriculum will be used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying behaviour and about the school's anti-bullying policy
- Challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos throughout the school

#### Constraints

However good our efforts are to resolve these problems, strategies often have to operate within a number of constraints:

- ❖ Incidents need to be resolved, not just smoothed over
- ❖ Those who feel aggrieved want to see 'justice' done
- ❖ Blame is rarely one-sided
- ❖ It may never be possible to prove what has really happened
- ❖ Exclusion of the alleged bully may not resolve the problem
- ❖ Levels of tolerance vary enormously for pupils and parents
- ❖ Expectations may be unrealistic
- ❖ The 'victim' may turn out to have been the bully!

#### Strategies

- There is a wide range of resources available commercially on how to deal with bullying. Some are already available in school or via the Internet. Staff are encouraged to make the Head aware of any other publications that appear to be particularly good. The DCFS publication: 'Bullying – don't suffer in

silence is kept in the staff room and is a valuable resource.

- INSED sessions focussing on the theme of bullying (SAFEchild, NSPCC and DCFS resources to be used, amongst others) to encourage a consistent and collegiate approach to any problem that may arise.
- Themed discussions in PSE
- Posters around the school encouraging children to think and talk about bullying.
- Assemblies focussing on communication, assertive behaviour, being kind, thinking of others, etc.,
- Purchase of themed 'work books' to be used with Pre-Prep children.
- Reinforcement of the South Lee ethos in various ways:
  - encouraging children to 'look after' new pupils
  - policy of regular discussions of children 'at risk'
  - a proactive approach
  - rewarding good behaviour/kind actions through merit marks, Richard Spring cup and Lady Miriam cup.

At Nursery level children are encouraged to be kind and think of others. We focus on positive reinforcement, and good behaviour is rewarded with praise and stickers. Our Nursery is highly staffed and children are monitored carefully at all times.