

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our children so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our playgroup. If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* setting. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. If a member of staff feels they are being bullied, or feels threatened they must report it to the Playgroup Manager.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person, child or adult. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
- Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

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. Children and adults who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. All settings have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All adults and children should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All staff, parents and children should know what the settings policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All children and parents should know what the settings policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a playgroup we take bullying seriously.
- Pupils, parents and staff should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms (please note that not all of these are applicable to children who are of playgroup age)

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:

- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- 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
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to staff member, or Playgroup Leader
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
3. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
4. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use the following methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- reading stories about bullying and behaviour
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk.