

WALTER HALLS PRIMARY AND EARLY YEARS SCHOOL



Anti-bullying Guide For Parents and Carers

‘Be a Buddy not a Bully’

(this our school’s Anti-bullying Motto)

Please read this guide in conjunction with the schools anti bullying policy, safeguarding & child-on-child abuse policy, which are all available on our website.

(REVIEWED DECEMBER 2024)

What is Bullying?

“Behaviour by an individual or group, **repeated** over time, that **intentionally** hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”

Sometimes we teach our children that bullying is:

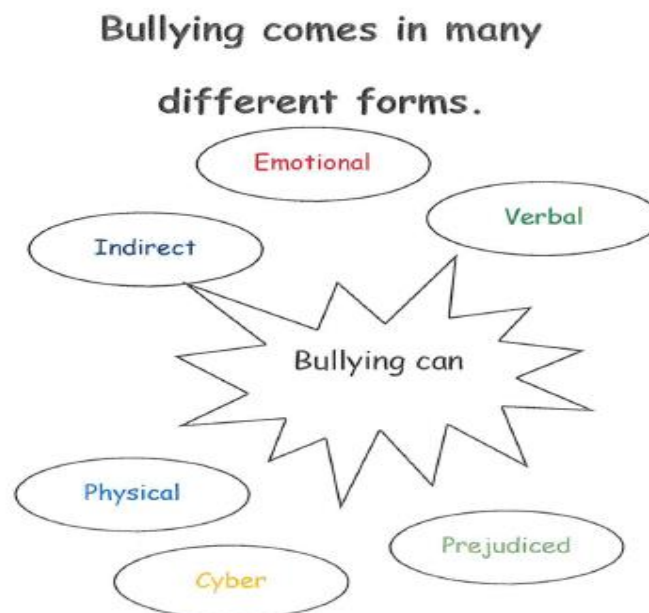
S – SEVERAL

T – TIMES

O – ON

P – PURPOSE

It is important to know that anyone can be the target of bullying. Very often bullying takes place because of difference or a ‘perceived’ difference. This can be for lots of reasons such as age, disability, gender, race, religion/ belief and sexual orientation.



Physical Bullying - kicking, hitting, taking things, sexual assault

Verbal Bullying - name calling, shouts of abuse, using threatening language.

Indirect Bullying - spreading rumours, being excluded from groups, intimidation, writing on walls.

Cyber Bullying - nasty text messages, emails, phone calls and through wider use of technology

What bullying isn't...?

All children at primary school are still very young and are still learning how to make friends and get along with each other. It is very normal for children to fall out with each other and change their friendship groups frequently as they grow and mature.

Our children come from many different families and backgrounds and they learn their behaviours from lots of different places.

For both of these reasons bullying takes some time to track and establish whether or not it is really bullying or not.

All children at primary school need help in learning how to cope with difficult situations. If a child is showing bullying behaviours at such a young age, there is usually something going on that they need lots of help with – as the adults we need to remember this and respond to our own children in a calm and understanding way.

- Bullying is not when two people have a disagreement or fall out over something.
- It isn't a child falling out with their peers and it isn't a one-off incident where pupils have become upset.

It's important that both staff and our parents and carers are clear on what bullying is and when NOT to use this term.

Our children will look to their parents and carers for guidance in sharing when they have an issue and it's important that we are all using the same language.

Instead of using the word 'bullying' straight away, say things like...

*That doesn't sound nice...

*Sounds like you have had a difference of opinion...

*Sounds like you have fallen out.

*Sounds like they need more help to learn how to be kind...

*Do you want me to help you speak to other adults who can help you with that?

What does Walter Halls have in place to support positive behaviour?

Our school has 3 simple rules '**Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Safe**' which can be applied to a variety of situations and are taught and modelled explicitly.

At Walter Halls we aim to:

- Provide a safe, comfortable and caring environment where optimum learning takes place
- Provide clear guidance for children, staff and parents of expected levels of behaviour
- Use a consistent and calm approach
- Ensure ALL adults take responsibility for managing behaviour and follow-up incidents personally
- Ensure ALL adults use consistent language to promote positive behaviour and
- Use restorative approaches instead of punishments

Pupil Roles and Responsibilities

We believe it is important for pupils to have responsibility and a strong voice in school.

Some of our **pupil roles** are:

- Head & Deputy students and Inclusion Ambassadors make up our student council – our main focus is to teach children about differences and being accepting of everyone.
- Sports Ambassadors and Play leaders. These are a team of trained children leading positive behaviour and conflict resolution on the playground. They act as good role models to others and encourage good behaviour.
- Role Models in KS2 – we choose various children to act as role models to our younger children around school. They help out in assemblies, in the dinner hall, with litter collection and with other jobs around school. This gives them a sense of pride and purpose.

Preventative measures

The following are established routines which aim to prevent negative behaviours and bullying in every single year group of school:

- Regular RSHE (Relationship, Social, Health Education) teaching every week in every class.
- High profile of our Core Values teaching, which are recognised and rewarded in weekly assemblies.
- Opportunities to be listened to and share opinions – each classroom has some form of 'worry box' and 'emotions 'check-in' system. We realise that not all of our children may feel confident in speaking with adults in school – every classroom has a private box for disclosures to be made by children and an 'emotions check-in' system each day. A child may also be offered their own book/diary to write anything in for adults to see separately if they would rather communicate this way.
- Our pastoral team consists of two mentors, a family support worker & a play therapist, all of which work full-time at Walter Halls. We invest a lot into helping our children and families and the provision we have here is substantial because we place such high importance on this aspect of our work.

What happens if my child is being bullied?

Unfortunately bullying can happen and when it does we take this seriously. When bullying does happen children may need additional support from our pastoral team and teachers may decide to address the issue in more detail during their PSHE lessons. Sometimes we may ask for outside support such as NSPCC, MHST (Mental Health Support Team), or the Police for additional support.

We will offer children the chance to speak with a variety of adults at particular points in the day to establish a routine of daily 'check-ins'.

If it is established that bullying is happening, a wider range of other children will be asked for their accounts of what has been seen and heard and this will be logged formally. At this point we will ensure that all adults both in school and at home will be spoken to so that adults can work together on changing these behaviours. A period of monitoring and feedback will be established to see if behaviours are changing.

How do we monitor, track and record bullying behaviours?

- To start with, class teachers will monitor the situation and may choose to make written records of incidents. It is not possible to make a written record of every situation and every conversation, but if repeated poor behaviour is seen by adults in school, written records of serious incidents should be in place.
- These records are placed in behaviour folders, which each phase leader oversees and checks for patterns. Our deputy head collects all of these folders in each half term to gather information for Governors meetings and re-checks negative patterns of behaviour are being dealt with swiftly. Governors are informed every half term on behaviour patterns being seen in school and any high-level incidents are discussed during Governors meetings with the headteacher.
- A formal safeguarding log will be made when behaviours are concerning and represent unsafe choices which are making a child vulnerable. We use an online system for all of our safeguarding logs and the safeguarding team meet fortnightly to discuss any and all concerns raised. At this point, the safeguarding team may decide that further support from outside agencies or from our own pastoral team, will help the children involved.
- Parents and carers can request copies of any behaviour and safeguarding logs made by school, via formal 'subject access request' made to our Data Protection Officer (DPO) in school.

What consequences are issued to bullies and when will this happen?

Our basic guiding principle is that all children of primary-age are still learning what is right and wrong and some do not have enough positive role models in their life or the necessary social skills and self-esteem in order to behave how we would want them to. Bullying is a sign of needing help and attention, a sign of having low self-esteem and a sign of being vulnerable in the future.

No one single system of consequences will suit every child in order to change their behaviours. We know our children very well and we make every effort to know their families and offer a range of measures to aim to change negative behaviours:

- Formal meetings with families and a period of monitoring and weekly checks – sometimes this is enough to change behaviour and should happen immediately.
- Isolation away from peers during breaktimes, lunchtimes or during learning times being sent to a different year group. This can be issued for a fixed period in order to give time and space away for both parties and time for adults to explore the issues further.
- Intensive 1:1 adult mentoring during school time. The school has two full-time mentors, a play therapist and family support worker all on site every day.
- Referrals to outside agencies: Children & Families Direct, Local police and community officers, Mental Health Support Team, CAMHS, Behaviour Support Team, Targeted Family Support, Play Therapy – are all agencies we work with regularly.
- Fixed-term exclusions from school site – being issued with a fixed-term exclusion will be placed on a child's record and can lead to permanent exclusion for repeated issues.
- Permanent exclusion – this is an exceptionally serious step to take and a last-resort after all other avenues of support have been explored over several months or even years. Removing a child's right to an education in mainstream school is a step that will never be taken lightly or happen quickly.

How can parents help?

- Know when using the term 'bullying' is helpful and accurate and when it is not – help your child to understand the difference between bullying and unkindness.
- Understand that all of the adults at school want to help – we are all part of the same team of adults who care about your child and we are not working against you. Schools are exceptionally busy places, full of children with very different needs and different families - sometimes that means that problems don't go away immediately. We are always on your side and want to help in whatever way we can, in between focusing on children's academic needs too.
- We understand that you care for your children and may be worried or upset – sometimes this comes out as anger or even aggression. It is never ok to take that out on a member of staff who is here to help you all. If you need time to feel calmer, try

to call the office to make an appointment to speak to someone when you feel able to do so in a calm way.

- It is never ok for parents or carers to approach a child either on school grounds or outside of school, about an incident or concern you have. Most parents would be upset and angry to know that their child had been approached by an unknown adult and we ask that you always come via us at school to seek ways to resolve issues. Children need the support of adults in school AND at home to help them reflect on their actions, whatever they may have done.
- Try and find out the full story before you speak to us so we can support in the best way:

Helpful phrases like...

Did you need support to sort it out or could this be something you could try first...?

Did you share what happened with an adult?

What do you think needs to happen next for you to feel better?

Do you want to talk it through now, we could think of some resolutions together?

- Help your child understand that they will come across difficult people all their life. Work with us to help your child develop skills to independently tackle problems that arise – there will be times when they can face conflict alone and other times when they will need to know when someone else needs to help them. As children grow older and mature, towards secondary school, we can help them to know this difference and how to help themselves.

Contacts for Further Advice

Childline www.childline.org.uk

Free 24hour telephone lines for children and young people: Telephone **0800 1111**

Parentline Plus www.parentlineplus.org.uk www.besomeonetotell.org.uk Tel: **0808 800 2222**

Kidscsape advice line

08451 205 204 (10am-4pm weekdays)

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/> **0808 800 5000**