



Action Against Bullying

Information for Parents

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We want our school to be safe and happy for everyone

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school

However, we recognise that: -

- bullying will happen from time to time
- the fact that it is not always reported does not mean it is not happening
- bullying makes children's lives unhappy and can hinder learning

The aim of this leaflet is to reassure parents that Newton Burgoland Primary School will respond positively and effectively to any bullying that may take place.

Bullying - a definition

We recognise that children can be **hurt**

Physically being hit, kicked, pushed or pinched

Verbally being called names, teased, criticised, shouted at or being the subject of rumours

Emotionally being left out of games, ignored, avoided, tormented, subjected to gestures

Sexually having unwanted physical contact or receiving abusive comments

We believe that **bullying** occurs when one child (or a group of children) **hurts** another child –

On purpose

Over and over again

Knowing that it upsets them

How does the school try to prevent bullying?

- **We are a Telling School with No Bystanders.**

We expect all children to challenge any bullying they see and report any bullying to an adult. Anyone who sees bullying happen and does not tell anyone is supporting the bullying.

- **We are careful to check 'Excuses'.**

If it was a *game*, was everyone enjoying it?

If it was a *joke*, was everyone laughing?

If it was an *accident*, was the victim treated accordingly?

If it was *borrowed*, did the owner give permission?

- **We undertake to investigate any alleged incidents of bullying whether reported by children or parents.**
- **We remind the children on a regular basis about our approach to preventing bullying as part of our Personal and Social Education and Assembly Programmes**

How would you know if your child is being bullied?

If your child is being bullied there may be changes that you can see in their behaviour.

If your child: -

- Becomes frightened of walking to or from school
- Is unwilling to come to school or feels ill in the mornings
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Becomes withdrawn, starts stammering, loses confidence
- Regularly has clothes or books damaged
- Cries easily or has nightmares
- Becomes distressed or stops eating
- Becomes disruptive, aggressive or unreasonable
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Has possessions or money go missing regularly
- Has unexplained bruises, scratches or cuts
- Starts stealing money (to pay a bully)
- Begins to bully other young children

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems as well, but the possibility of bullying should be investigated.

What if you suspect that your child is being bullied in school?

- Talk calmly with your child about what is upsetting them and make a note of what is said
- Re-assure your child that they have done the right thing to tell you
- Tell your child that they should tell a teacher or other adult immediately should any further incident occur
- Inform your child's teacher of what you have found out

How do you report incidents of bullying?

Children are encouraged to tell an adult if they have been bullied. They may also leave a note in the school *Worry Box* if they wish.

Parents are encouraged to phone or write to the class teacher or Head Teacher if they have any concerns.

What will the school's response be?

- We will accept what your child has said and take their concerns seriously
- We will investigate the incident(s), talking separately with all the children involved
- If bullying has occurred, we will record the incident; the bully will receive a formal warning and will be asked to apologise. The victim will be assured that they should immediately report any future incidents and know that they will be listened to.
- We will monitor the children's behaviour over the following few days to check that all is well
- We will inform parents of the outcome of the investigation and keep in touch until it is felt there is no longer any risk of bullying.
- If there are repeated or serious incidents, parents will be informed and invited to meet with the class teacher or Head Teacher; the bully will be subject to sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy; and the victim will continue to receive support from identified members of staff.
- In extreme cases, the school may involve the LEA's Behavioural Support Services and the Educational Psychologist. The school also reserves the right to exclude children whose behaviour remains wholly unacceptable.

What can your child do if they are bullied?

We will teach the children: -

- to laugh at or ignore the bullying
- to be firm with the bully saying *No* loudly and clearly
- to say clearly that what the bully is doing is not acceptable
- to get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- to stay with a group or seek out other friends
- to tell an adult what has happened straight away
- to realise that if they are bullied, it is not their fault

Parents should not instruct children to *give as good as they get* or *hit back*. This simply leads to further problems. We want to help children to be assertive rather than aggressive.

How can your child help prevent bullying?

- The most effective deterrent to bullying is other children.
- We expect children to report bullying.
- We want the bully to know that their actions will be reported automatically.
- We want them to know that they cannot rely on the victim or bystanders to remain silent.
- All children can play their part in making sure that nobody gets hurt or left out.

What makes a child bully other children?

Some children may get involved in bullying for a short period and quickly learn that the behaviour is unacceptable. In these cases, parents and teachers working together can usually change the child's behaviour. Children may have become involved in bullying because: -

- They do not know that it is wrong
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or friends
- They have problems mixing with friends
- They are having a particularly difficult time and are facing some problems

What if my child is bullying?

Above all, parents should remain calm and not blame themselves or get angry with their child. It may be difficult to accept that your child has been involved in bullying but they will still need your love and the school will need your support.

- Talk with your child about their behaviour and explain that it is unacceptable
- Try to find out why they are bullying other children
- Set firm but realistic guidelines for your child's behaviour
- Ensure that your child has apologised and accepted responsibility for their actions
- Discuss what you have found out with your child's teacher or the Head Teacher
- Keep in touch with the school about how things are going
- Give your child lots of praise when they are kind to other children

Occasionally, a child becomes a regular bully and may need external help to come to terms with their problem and accept responsibility for their behaviour and the hurt it is causing.

It is not usually helpful simply to tell your child not to play with another child or to ignore them without consulting the school. This avoids dealing with the real problem and may result in the child being confused about what to do if the children become friends again.

Further Information

Our Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy are available on our website.

Kidscape Helpline offers advice to parents - www.kidscape.org.uk/kidscape