

The Ark Federation
Anti-Bullying Policy



**This Policy was adopted by the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Governing Body of the Ark Federation at a meeting held on 11 March 2015 and reviewed on 9 March 2016
It will be reviewed annually**

Signed:
(Mrs G McMenemey, Chair of Teaching and Learning committee)

Statement of Intent

The Ark Federation is committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. We encourage healthy friendships and relationships based on our 5 Christian values of Truth, Love, Peace, Patience and Respect.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our schools. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

At our schools we acknowledge that bullying rarely happens. If bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with this anti-bullying policy. We are *TELLING* schools. This means that *anyone* who suspects that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in.

All members of the schools have a responsibility to recognise bullying if it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the Federation policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- The schools will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The schools will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome2) and The Children Act 2004.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the Federation policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it if bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PHSE [Personal, Health & Social Education] lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the Federation to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within each school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times On Purpose). Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s.

Bullying can be:

- *Emotional*: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- *Verbal*: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
- *Physical*: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
- *Racist*: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- *Sexual*: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- *Homophobic*: because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- *Online/cyber*: setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the *odd occasion* of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP).

Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship conflicts, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Where does bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the playground.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning

- begins to under perform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- 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 taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs

The schools of the Ark federation are inclusive schools. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying across the Ark Federation. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

1. Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
2. Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
3. Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
4. Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
5. The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
6. Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
7. Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
8. Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
9. The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied (see next section).
10. The pupils will be reconciled.
11. An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
12. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on the standard Incident Report Sheet. All reports will be kept in a file in each school office.
13. In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
14. After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
15. Any bullying incidents will be discussed at staff meetings and reported to Governors.
16. If necessary and appropriate, Social Services or police will be consulted.

The following sanctions may be used:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing

- Lose privileges
- Lose playtimes (stay with class teacher, write lines or do extra work)
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult
- Parents will be invited in to school
- Be removed from class and work in isolation
- Report to the Headteacher
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visit, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Strategies for the prevention of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These can include:

- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules
- Awareness raising through regular values assemblies
- PHSE (Personal, Health & Social Education) scheme of work from Reception to Year 6 used to support this policy
- Circle time on friendship issues
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of children volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulties
- Children writing stories and poems and drawing pictures and using 'feelings' books
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with friendship conflicts
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives
- Awareness raising through Life Skills courses
- Implementation of the Positive Play Programme
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another

Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be reviewed annually.
