



Linton CE Infant School

Policy for: Anti-Bullying

**Agreed by: Curriculum & Data
committee**

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Linton CE Infant School: where happiness and achievement go hand in hand

The staff and governors at Linton C.E. Infant school provide an environment where children and all school members can be happy, healthy and safe and achieve their full social and intellectual potential.

We do this by:

- creating a caring, Christian environment,
- creating happy, stimulating and exciting opportunities for learning,
- developing positive relationships based on respect of self and others,
- supporting a creative approach to personal development and growth.

We work in partnership with parents, St Mary's Church and our community to fully equip children for their future.

We at Linton CE Infant School, appreciate that achieving our vision is sometimes hindered by presence of bullying in our school. Our school community will not tolerate unkind actions or remarks, even if they were not intended to hurt. The staff of Linton CE Infant School will lead by example and teach those in our care to treat others with respect and without prejudice positively demonstrating our agreed values.

Objectives:

- To educate everyone as to what bullying is;
- To reduce bullying incidents in our school through positive modelling of behaviour based on empowerment and belonging;
- To ensure that incidents are disclosed and dealt with quickly and appropriately by a responsible adult, with sanctions in line with the Behaviour policy.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text message, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. *(DofE Preventing and tackling bullying July 2017)*

What are the different types of bullying?

Bullying behaviour across all types of bullying can represent itself in a number of different forms. Children and young people can be bullied in ways that are:

Physical – by being punched, pushed or hurt; made to give up money or belongings; having property, clothes or belonging damaged; being forced to do something they don't want to do.

Verbal – by being teased in a nasty way; called gay (whether or not it's true); insulted about their race, religion or culture; called names in other ways or having offensive comments directed at them

Indirect – by having nasty stories told about them; being left out, ignored or excluded from groups.

Electronic/'cyberbullying' - for example, via text message; via instant messenger services and social network sites; via email; and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phones.

Specific Types of Bullying

Specific Types of Bullying include:

Bullying related to race, religion or culture

Bullying related to special educational and disability needs (SEND)

Bullying related to being gifted or talented

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Bullying related to appearance or health conditions

Bullying related to sexual orientation

Bullying of young carers or looked – after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Sexist or sexual bullying

The school recognise that bullying is a complex type of behaviour occurring between individuals and groups. Different roles within bullying situations can be identified and include:

- The ring-leader, the person who through their position of power can direct bullying activity
- Assistants/associates who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader)
- Reinforcers who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing
- Outsiders/bystanders who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour
- Defenders who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort pupils who experience bullying.

Some children can adopt different roles at different times, or at the same time (a bullied child might be bullying another child at the same time, or a seeming ‘reinforcer’ might become a ‘defender’ when the ringleader is not around).

Recognising Signs and Symptoms

The school recognises the fact that some children are more vulnerable to bullying than others and is sensitive to the changes of behaviour that may indicate that a child or young person is being bullied. Children who are being bullied may demonstrate physical, emotional and behavioural problems. The following physical signs and behaviour could indicate other problems but bullying will be considered as a possibility:

- Being frightened of walking to or from school
- Losing self confidence and self-esteem
- Being frightened to say what’s wrong
- Developing unexplained cuts, bruises and other injuries
- Unwilling to go to school, development of school phobia and unusual patterns of non attendance
- Failing to achieve potential in school work
- Becoming withdrawn, nervous and losing concentration
- Becoming isolated and disengaged from other children
- Developing changes in physical behaviour such as stammering and nervous ticks
- Regularly having books or clothes destroyed
- Having possession go ‘missing’ or ‘lost’ including packed lunch and money
- Starting to steal money (to pay the perpetrator)
- Becoming easily distressed, disruptive or aggressive
- Developing problems with eating and food
- Running away
- Developing sleep problems and having nightmares
- Developing suicidal thoughts or attempting suicide

Where children are exhibiting extreme signs of distress and changes in behaviour, the school will liaise with parents/carers and where appropriate, relevant health professionals and agencies such as the school nurse / G.P. and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

Recognising Reasons for why Children may Bully

The school recognises the fact that children may bully for a variety of reasons. Recognising why children bully supports the school in identifying children who are at risk of engaging with this type of behaviour. This enables the school to intervene at an early stage to prevent the likelihood of bullying occurring and to respond promptly to incidents of bullying as they occur. Understanding the emotional health and well-being

Policies/anti-bullying policy

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of children who bully is key to selecting the right responsive strategies and to engaging the right external support. Possible reasons for why some children may engage in bullying include:

- Struggling to cope with a difficult personal situation e.g. bereavement, changes in family circumstances
- Liking the feeling of power and using bullying behaviour to get their own way
- Having a temperament that may be aggressive, quick tempered or jealous
- Having been abused or bullied in some way
- Feeling frustrated, insecure, inadequate, humiliated
- Finding it difficult to socialise and make friends
- Being overly self-orientated (possibly displaying good self-esteem) and finding it difficult to empathise with the needs of others
- Being unable to resist negative peer pressure
- Being under pressure to succeed at all costs

What should the child do?

Bullying is always dealt with as a serious matter. All forms of bullying are recorded and monitored. Pupils understand that this behaviour is not tolerated. To make it simple the children are taught: **STOP:**

Several Times On Purpose

Start Telling Other People

- Tell a teacher, they will report it and every incident will be investigated;
- Be assertive - try to stick up for yourself;
- You should not keep it a secret and you should not be ashamed;
- Do not think that only violence is bullying - hurtful whispering or ostracizing is very upsetting and can make children miserable.

Responding to Incidents of Bullying

The school has an agreed procedure for responding consistently to incidents or allegations of bullying. Direct action to respond to incidents of bullying occurs within a context, which reminds all children that bullying behaviour is unacceptable to the school and will not be tolerated.

At our school all children are encouraged to report incidents of bullying whether they have been bullied or have witnessed bullying. The school will investigate the incident including the context and the roles of the people involved.

When responding to incidents involving any type of bullying the school will consider the situation in relation to the school's Child Protection policy and procedures. Statutory guidance on safeguarding children identifies 'Emotional Abuse' as featuring 'serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger; or the exploitation or corruption of children'. In cases of severe or persistent bullying, staff will liaise with the Designated Person for Child Protection particularly where there are concerns that a child or young person may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm in terms of emotional abuse.

The procedure and stages in responding effectively to bullying at our school are:

- Monitoring and recording behaviour and relationship issues. The school follows a clear pastoral support system, which enables challenging behaviour and relationship problems to be identified, recorded and addressed. This process is part of the school's overall positive behaviour policy. It supports the detection of bullying and allows for intervention at an early stage. This system involves using a monitoring system to record issues, using the school's definition of bullying to assess situations as they arise and working alongside all parties to form a judgement as to where bullying has occurred.
- Making sure the person being bullied is safe and feels safe. When a child reports being bullied (including when they describe disability, racist, gender or homophobic bullying), the school will acknowledge their concerns and the incident will be taken seriously. Incidents of bullying reported by witnesses are treated in the same manner.
- Establishing and recording what happened by listening to different perspectives, including those of the person bullied, the person doing the bullying and those that have witnessed the bullying

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('bystanders'). Throughout this process a written record and log will be kept of the initial incident and any subsequent incidents. These records detail what happened and who was involved including the views and observations of any bystanders. Follow up action / strategies and the monitoring and impact of these strategies are also recorded. The logging form covers;

- Date, time incident reported
- Member of staff to whom the incident was reported
- Date, time, location of alleged incident
- Nature of the alleged incident from the perspective of the person being bullied, witnesses and other parties.
- Date, time when parents/carers were informed
- Details of immediate action taken
- Details of follow up strategies including outcomes of mediation and reconciliation process

When an incident of bullying is reported the school will endeavour to make a written record of this incident within 24 hours of the incident occurring. Written records are factual and where opinions are offered these are based on factual evidence. Children are invited to contribute initially and on an ongoing basis throughout the follow up period. Where appropriate children are told what should happen to the information. Recording incidents helps to build a picture of behaviour patterns in school e.g. who, when, how, what action taken. It enables the school to manage individual cases effectively and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies.

Records of bullying incidents will be kept in the Anti Bullying log in the Headteacher's Office and in perpetuity the school will submit figures in relation to racist bullying / incidents to the local authority on a termly basis via the PRIDE website. This information allows the Council to monitor the occurrence of incidents and identify underlying trends in racist bullying so that appropriate and relevant training and support can be provided to schools.

An additional written record will also be kept and shared with the governing body. The governing body will use this record to support the submission of figures in relation to racist bullying / incidents to the local authority on a termly basis.

Deciding upon a response.

All incidents of bullying will be responded to seriously and the behaviour of those who have been bullying will be challenged. It will be made clear that such behaviour is unacceptable. In all cases of bullying the school will initially consider the use of a restorative approach to resolving the situation. The school believes that children causing harm should be held to account for their behaviour.

This means:

- Accepting responsibility for the harm caused to the individual being bullied;
- Accepting responsibility for the harm caused to others (for example staff, friends or family);
- Recognising the need to take action to begin to repair the harm caused;
- Agreeing a range of actions – in conjunction with all those involved- which will be monitored over an agreed period of time.

Following up incidents of bullying.

The school is currently using The Support Group Approach (No Blame) led by staff

This approach supports the person who is doing the bullying through a process of mediation to help them to understand and accept that it is wrong to bully, take responsibility for their behaviour and make amends. This involves the person focusing on their unacceptable behaviour in an emotionally intelligent way. The school believes that all bullying is unacceptable but that many children who display anti-social behaviour and lack empathy for others can be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and change their behaviour.

The school will consider the use of disciplinary sanctions when responding to incidents of bullying. This may be where the school's restorative approach has failed to prevent further incidents of bullying. Where appropriate the school may use sanctions in conjunction with the school's restorative approach. Sanctions

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will be applied fairly and proportionately in accordance with the school's behaviour policy, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that children may have and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children. Bullying by children with disabilities or SEN is no more acceptable than bullying by other children. However for a sanction to be reasonable and lawful the school will take account of the nature of the children's disability or SEN and the extent to which they understand and are in control of what they are doing. Disciplinary sanctions are intended to:

- Impress on the perpetrator that what he/she has done is unacceptable
- Deter him/her from repeating that behaviour
- Signal to other children that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

Sanctions for bullying are intended to hold the children who bully to account for their behaviour and ensure that they face up to the harm they have caused and learn from it. They also provide an opportunity for the children to put right the harm they have caused.

The consequences of bullying should reflect the seriousness of the incident. The school takes verbal and indirect bullying as seriously as physical bullying. When deciding upon appropriate sanctions for bullying the school will ensure that the sanctions address bullying behaviour in a way which does not lead to an escalation of the behaviour but instead supports a resolution to the problem. This approach gives the best chance that bullying will not be repeated. The school will draw upon the school's behaviour management policy and follow the system for sanctions, which includes:

- Removing child/young person who is bullying from particular groups of children including withdrawing them from certain activities breaktimes/lunchtimes.
- Withdrawing privileges such as excluding the child/ young person from school trips, confiscating personal property in accordance with the school's agreed criteria.

In the case of more serious and persistent bullying, where the perpetrator has not responded to the school's restorative strategies (see above) or sanctions, the school may consider excluding the perpetrator from the school. Serious cases of bullying can include where violence and damage to property has taken place. The DFE guidance for exclusion appeal panels makes clear that 'pupils responsible for violence and threatened violence should not normally be reinstated'. Some children who have been subjected to bullying can be provoked into violent behaviour. Where an attack has been provoked after months of persistent bullying, this will be considered differently from an unprovoked attack.

Part of the school's process of responding to an incident is to seek an agreement to meet at some point in the future to see whether the situation has been resolved or whether further work needs to take place. This will include evaluating the effectiveness of the follow up strategies that have been put in place to ensure that the bullying has stopped. The school does not assume that a situation requires no further attention simply because a child has made no further complaints. Where a problem has not been resolved to the satisfaction of all parties the follow up strategies will be reviewed and/or further advice sought.

Working with Parents/Carers

Where the school has become aware of a bullying situation, parents/carers of the child/young person who is being bullied and the child/ young person who is allegedly bullying, will be invited to the school to discuss their children's behaviour.

The school will endeavour to involve parents/carers constructively at an early stage to support the process of investigating allegations and positively working together to seek ways of resolving the situation and bringing about reconciliation. The outcome of the meeting and agreed actions/responses will be recorded by the school. The school adopts a problem solving approach with parents/carers e.g. 'It seems your son/daughter and (other child) have not been getting on very well' rather than 'your son/daughter has been bullying....'. While the school firmly believes that all bullying is unacceptable and that the perpetrators should be made to accept responsibility for their behaviour and make amends, the school will refrain from apportioning blame to the different parties involved as this could undermine the cooperative ethos that the school is seeking to promote.

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A cooperative ethos is desirable when trying to reach a resolution that is effective and long lasting. The school will work alongside those parents/carers whose children have been bullied to support them in developing their children's coping strategies and assertiveness skills. Parents/carers of those causing the bullying will also have support in coming to a balanced view of what is happening and appreciating their role in helping their children to learn about the consequences of their actions.

The school takes parents/carers reporting bullying seriously. Parents are initially encouraged to refer their concerns to the class teacher and more senior members of staff such as those on the Leadership Team, the Assistant Head and Headteacher will be involved where appropriate. Parents/carers are encouraged to note details of the incident to share with the class teacher/ member of staff. A record of the incident and the agreed actions/response made at the meeting will be recorded by the school and added to the school's bullying incidents report form. The school will then invest the time to further establish and record what happened by listening to the different perspectives of all those reportedly involved in the incident, including those of the person bullied, the person doing the bullying and those that have witnessed the bullying ('bystanders'). The school ensures that staff and parents/carers remain fully aware of the measures that have been put into place to prevent the occurrence of further incidents. Follow up appointments are made with parent/carers to share these agreed measures and to monitor their success in preventing further bullying.

Following Up / Supporting and Monitoring

The school employs a number of specific measure/strategies to minimise further risks of bullying and to ensure that children feel safe. Strategies include immediate and longer-term support for all parties including the person being bullied, bystanders and the person who has done the bullying. Many of the school's strategies include problem solving processes, which enable a situation to be disentangled and explored, and help to reveal underlying issues.

In most cases the school will encourage honest and direct discussion and use a reconciliation process like this before going down the sanction route.

Many of the following strategies involve active participation from children and involve children helping themselves and each other. Some strategies form a part of the school's anti bullying preventative work.

Our strategies include:

- Providing opportunities for class, circle time where children can explore the needs of their peers. These are planned sessions in which the teacher facilitates a safe and positive environment for children to take turns, if they choose, to talk about an issue of concern. The whole group is encouraged to listen carefully and discuss ways to help the individual in a problem solving way
- Accessing support from external agencies and professionals including educational psychologists, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), the Cambridgeshire Specialist Teaching Service, the Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service.
- Providing opportunities for children who have been bullied or are bullying to attend social skills groups to develop emotional resilience and learn skills in assertiveness, listening, negotiating and empathising with others.
- Providing supportive and nurturing structures such as a 'Circle of Friends' for identified vulnerable individuals

The Support Group Approach (No Blame) involves holding regular meetings individually and jointly with the person being bullied, the person who is bullying and bystanders using a 'problem solving' process. The teacher/ member of staff acts as a neutral third party and uses open questions to enable the child to explore and solve the problem for themselves through developing an appreciation for the feelings of others, empathy and a wish to resolve the situation and heal damaged relationships.

The Support Group Method (No Blame Approach) – How It Works

The Support Group Method, developed by Barbara Maines and George Robinson, was first outlined in Educational Psychology in Practice (1991). The approach addresses bullying by forming a support group of children and young people who have been bullying and/or have been involved as bystanders. It uses a

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problem-solving approach, without apportioning blame, giving responsibility to the group to solve the problem and to report back at a subsequent review meeting.

When bullying has been observed or reported, then The Support Group Method offers a simple seven-step procedure, which can be used by a teacher or other facilitator. It should be noted that each step has been carefully planned as a single part of the whole and variations may undermine the success of the method. The steps are summarised below.

Step one – talk with the victim

When the facilitator finds out that bullying has happened, they start by talking to the person who has been bullied. During this conversation the listener encourages them to describe how they feel with reflective comments such as, “That must be very hard for you ... So you have felt really upset”.

The purpose is not to discover factual evidence about this or other events; if the person wants to include evidence in the account this is always reframed to establish the resulting distress. For example a comment like, “They have all been ignoring me, nobody will talk to me.” might be replied to with a response like, “So, you felt really lonely and you were upset that you had nobody to talk to”.

It is important that the person being bullied understands and gives consent to the process. Sometimes there may be a fear that it could lead to further victimisation but when the non-punitive aspect is fully explained they usually feel safe, and relieved that something is being done. They may want the perpetrators to understand how much distress has been caused. Talking to someone else who has been through the experience might give further reassurance.

The facilitator should end the meeting by:

- Checking that nothing confidential has been discussed which should not be disclosed to the group.
- Asking the person to suggest the names of those involved, some colluders or observers and some friends who will make up the group.
- Inviting the person to produce a piece of writing or a picture which will illustrate their unhappiness.

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- Offering the person an opportunity to talk again at any time during the procedure if things are not going well.

Step two – convene a meeting with the people involved

The facilitator arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved and suggested by the person who has been bullied. A group of six to eight works well. This is an opportunity for the facilitator to use their judgement to balance the group so that helpful and reliable young people are included alongside those whose behaviour has been causing distress. The aim is to use the strengths of group members to bring about the best outcome.

Step three – explain the problem

The facilitator starts by telling the group that they, the facilitator have a problem – they are worried about ‘John’ who is having a very hard time at the moment. The facilitator recounts the story of ‘John’s’ unhappiness and uses the piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise their distress. At no time does the facilitator discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step four – share responsibility

When the account is finished, the listeners may look downcast or uncomfortable and be uncertain about the reason for the meeting. Some may be anxious about possible punishment. The facilitator makes a change in the mood here by stating explicitly that:

- No-one is in trouble or going to be punished
- There is a joint responsibility to help ‘John’ to be happy and safe
- The group has been convened to help solve the problem.

Step five – ask the group members for their ideas

Group members are usually genuinely moved by the account of their peer’s distress and relieved that they are not in trouble. No-one has been pushed into a defensive corner by accusations and the power of the group has shifted from the “bully leader” to the group as a whole, whose members withdraw consent for the behaviour to continue.

Each member of the group is then encouraged to suggest a way in which ‘John’ could be helped to feel happier. These ideas are stated in the “I” language of intention. “I will walk to school with him.” “I will ask him to sit with me at dinner.” Ideas are owned by the group members and not imposed by the facilitator. The facilitator makes positive responses but does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step six – leave it up to them

The facilitator ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. No written record is made - it is left as a matter of trust. The facilitator thanks the group members, expresses confidence in a positive outcome and arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

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Step seven – meet them again

About a week later, the teacher/ facilitator discusses with each pupil, including the person who has been bullied, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the young people involved in the process.

These meetings are with one group member at a time so that each can give a statement about their contribution without creating a competitive atmosphere. It does not matter if everyone has not kept to his or her intention, as long as the bullying has stopped. The person who has been bullied does not have to become the most popular person in school, just to be safe and happy.

The above description of the Support Group Method is taken from Lucky Duck Publishing website. www.luckyduck.co.uk.

The Support Group Method is a well recognised approach used in many schools and local authorities across the country. The approach was originally called 'The No Blame Approach' but has recently had a change of name due to misconceptions regarding the process because of the use of the words 'no blame'. The process does in fact enable those that bully to acknowledge the damage caused to others by their behaviour and supports those that are bullying to develop empathy for others and take responsibility for changing their behaviour. It is suggested that schools keep as closely as possible to the steps outlined in the process as this is a proven process and alterations to the protocol may jeopardize the positive effects of the process.

However, having trailed this process, schools may feel that adjustments are required to ensure that the programme suits the needs of their school and individual children and young people. Schools may feel, for example, that where it is suggested that no notes are required in step 6, they may wish to make discrete notes after the meeting, for their own reference.

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Appendix A - Bullying Incident Report Form

Logging and Filing information

This form should be completed within 24 hours of the incident's being reported. Due consideration should be given to issues of confidentiality, including third party information.

ALLEGED BULLYING INCIDENT

Student allegedly bullied;

Name(s);

DOB

Year Group;

Ethnicity;

Gender M / F

SEN Stage;

Home language;

Looked-after child Y / N

Date of incident;

Time of incident;

Location of incident;

Nature of incident, identify details of any injury or damage to property, etc

Circle any elements that apply;

Racist Sexual/Sexist Homophobic SEN/Disability

Member of staff to whom the incident was reported;

Alleged perpetrator(s);

Witnesses to the incident;

Witness reports of incident (continue on separate sheets if necessary)

Parents/carers of alleged subject(s) informed;

Date Time

Parents/carers of alleged perpetrators informed;

Date Time

Details of immediate action taken;