

November 2015  **Burdett-Coutts and Townshend Foundation School**
Anti-Bullying Newsletter

Survey Results

Schools and organisations with a duty of care must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent bullying in all its forms.

This is a special anti-bullying edition of the newsletter that aims to outline how school staff effectively tackle bullying.

What is the school doing about bullying?

We have both an anti-bullying policy and strategy but have realised that we need to publicise more widely what we do. Our anti-bullying strategy includes the following actions:

- **We teach children how to deal with bullying** through weekly circle time discussions. Teachers provide the children with examples of what they can say and do if they are being bullied. At these sessions, concerns about bullying are discussed and positive examples of friendships and anti-bullying tips are shared and celebrated. Children are taught how to turn others down nicely if they do not want to play with them at playtimes / lunchtimes.
- **We have playground buddies who initiate games at lunchtime and breaktime** with children who might otherwise be left out.
- **We have 9 lunchtime staff, to prevent children from getting bored at lunchtimes.**
- **From September, we will have an anti-bullying specialist train all staff annually on anti-bullying strategies, class management skills, how to deal with incidents and how to reduce the potential for bullying.**
- **In classrooms, cyber rules are displayed by the computer, reminding children about safe computer and internet use.**

Why do children bully

Children bully for various reasons amongst which are that:

- They want to be 'in' with the cool gang.
- It feels like fun – they don't realise how much it hurts.
- They dislike or are jealous of someone.
- It makes them feel powerful or respected.
- It gets them what they want (sweets, money).
- They are bullied themselves and are taking out their hurt and anger on someone who won't fight back.
- They are having problems in their lives that are making them feel bad.

REMEMBER: people who are happy in themselves do not generally feel the need to bully others!

I just want it to stop!



What bullying is and what bullying isn't...

1. Bullying goes on for a while, or happens regularly.
2. Bullying is deliberate. The perpetrator wants to hurt, humiliate or harm the victim.
3. Bullying involves someone (or several people) who are stronger in some way than the person being bullied. The person doing the bullying has more power; perhaps older, stronger, has some 'hold' over the victim (e.g a secret) or is possibly in a group.

Bullying is a combination of **all three** elements so children will be taught that **bullying is not:**

- A one-off fight or argument
- A friend sometimes being nasty
- An argument with a friend.

What to do if your child is being bullied

- Meet with the class teacher or arrange an appointment to meet with **Mrs Dyer, Mrs Manuel or Mr Murphy**. They will endeavour to meet with you on the same day of your enquiry or within 24 hours.
- **Mrs Dyer, Mrs Manuel or Mr Murphy** will investigate the matter: they will talk to all the children involved and their class teacher(s) and write a report.
- This report will be shared with you within 24 hours. It will outline the plan in place to stop any further incidents.
- **Ms Lavinia Deary**, (Family Support Worker), will talk to your child at several points during the first week, to reassure them that their concerns are being taken seriously and to ensure that they feel safe and supported.
- **Ms Caroline Hall**, (the Senior School Meals Supervisor), will also monitor your child at lunchtime for the week and assist your child in resolving any lunchtime issues.

Make a
NOISE
about bullying
#ANTIBULLYINGWEEK

Why Schools don't just get rid of bullies

Parents are often surprised when schools don't automatically exclude pupils who are bullying others. Of course, as parents, our first concern will always be for our own child's safety and happiness so it is natural to ask why the school seems to want to work with their tormentors instead of getting rid of them.

There are many reasons. It is important to note that a number of children have been bullied, seen bullying and even bullied at some time. There is no evidence that children are born 'bullies' or 'victims' – **they change roles according to where they are and who they are with.**

If schools simply move the problem children to another school, others will continue to suffer. At Burdett-Coutts, we aim to deal with the problem and try to stop the child from bullying altogether! Of course, the school will always have the right to exclude them if their efforts don't change the situation.

Things we teach about Cyber Bullying

1. Always ask before you send a picture or information that could be shared with other people. Remember that you don't know what will happen to any pictures or information you let people have. What you think of as a joke might be really upsetting for the other person when the whole world sees it.
2. Think before you send a message about yourself or any other person involved. It doesn't take long for it to be shared with every single person you know (from your best friend to your grandmother to your worst enemy).
3. Never give out personal information when it can be shared with others. You may trust your new friends, but you don't know theirs.
4. Treat your password like your toothbrush – don't let anyone else use it!
5. If you receive nasty messages, texts, comments etc...block the person sending them and always report it to an adult (a parent, someone at school, or your service provider).

Don't reply to a bullying message but do keep it as evidence, whether it is a picture, message or online communication.

Whole school Anti-Bullying Training

We work in partnership with **Kidscape** as part of their **Primary Bullying Intervention Programme**. This programme provides:

- **Parents** with anti-bullying strategies;
- **Pupils** with lessons to equip them with skills to improve peer relationships, increase self-esteem and confidence, and reduce bullying behaviour;
- **Staff** with bullying prevention strategies and the knowledge and best practice to ensure that they can recognise, prevent and reduce bullying.



Challenging bullies!

There are ways of changing bullying behaviour, by:

- helping bullies to understand their victim's feelings and the effect their behaviour has on them (developing their empathy);
- teaching them to stand up to peer pressure;
- giving them support to manage the problems they are facing in their own lives.

All of these things can change bullying behaviour for good.

We appreciate parents' efforts to understand what the school is trying to do and why. When children who are being bullied are asked what they want to happen, they very rarely mention punishing the other child or revenge, they almost always say:

'I just want it to stop'

Maybe we should think the same way!

What to do if your child is bullying others

If you are told that your child is bullying others, stay calm. Don't immediately dismiss the idea ('What? My John – never!') or rush into severe punishment. And try not to call your child a 'bully' (labels can stick) – we are all capable of inadvertently bullying at times.

Your child is **not** a monster! When you talk, stay calm and explain that you still love him/her – it is simply the current behaviour that you do not like or approve of.

Listen to what your child has to say. Arrange to see the teacher. Stay calm and listen to what the teacher has to say.

Talk to your child about how the other person feels – the perpetrator rarely understands the extent to which the victim has been hurt and upset and is frightened by the bullying.

Help your child to develop confidence and make friends – happy people don't generally bully others!

Top TIPS for parents to prevent bullying

- Model empathy for others – talk about how other people might feel in different situations: in real-life, TV programmes, books, films, and plays.
- Talk openly about what bullying is and how it feels. Make it easy for children to talk about bullying – let them know you won't make them feel silly whatever their worries. With younger children, puppets are a good way to help them talk about their worries and feelings.
- Talk to children about different sorts of bullying. As well as physical harm, threats and taking things, it can include name-calling, leaving someone out (exclusion), rumour spreading or forcing children to do something they don't want to do. All of these can be as hurtful and humiliating as physical bullying.
- Teach them how to avoid electronic (cyber) bullying.
- To be eligible to sign up for Facebook, you must be at least 13 years old. Please reinforce this with your child as no primary aged child should have a Facebook account.