

# **Patterdale C of E Primary School**

## **Bullying Policy**

### **Written by the children of Patterdale School**

Policy date	January 2012
Signed	Head teacher
Signed	Chair of Governors
Signed	School Council representative
Review date	2014

#### **What is Bullying?**

- Being called names
- Being excluded
- Being teased
- Having things taken or hidden
- Being hit, punched, kicked or deliberately injured
- Being made to do something, such as give something away, even money
- Spreading rumours or nasty stories about someone
- Sending nasty emails or text messages
- Carrying something on, against a person's wishes
- Hurting people's feelings

#### **Who gets bullied?**

Anyone can be bullied; some children may be more vulnerable than others. They might act or look different from others, but they might not. It can happen to anyone at any time. Sometimes bullying can be racist, sexist or homophobic.

Any child can be bullied and although none of these characteristics can excuse it, certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- Lacking close friends in school
- Being shy
- An over protective family environment
- Being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- Being different in some obvious way, such as stammering
- Having educational needs or a disability
- Behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a nuisance
- Possessing expensive things such as mobile 'phones or computer games

### **Who bullies?**

Again, almost anyone can be a bully. Bullies may have been bullied themselves. A bully can act independently or with a group. Sometimes someone becomes a bully because of lack of friends or problems at home.

### **Symptoms of bullying**

Victims may be reluctant to attend school and are often absent. They may be more anxious or insecure than others, having fewer friends and often feeling unhappy and lonely. Victims can suffer from low self-esteem and negative self image, looking upon themselves as failures-feeling stupid, ashamed and unattractive.

Victims may present a variety of symptoms to health professionals, including fits, faints, vomiting, limb pains, paralysis, hyperventilation, visual symptoms, headaches, stomach aches, bed wetting, sleeping difficulties and sadness. Being bullied may lead to depression or, in the most serious cases, attempted suicide. It may lead to loneliness and lack of trust in adult life.

### **How will our school deal with bullying?**

Firstly, we recognise that bullying does take place in our school; it is rare, but it does happen. We make every endeavour to ensure that children understand what bullying is and how to deal with it, through PSHE, Circle Time, Worship Time and discussion when it arises. We have also undertaken work with Forum Theatre (Ally comes to Cumbria) and have worked with the materials from the Heartstone Project (Children's Fund).

Children are encouraged to talk about bullying and to tell if they are being bullied. If we – the staff are informed about bullying we will:

- Never ignore suspected bullying
- Never make premature assumptions
- Listen carefully to all accounts
- Adopt a problem solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves
- Follow-up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed.

### **Mediation**

We will:

- Hold brief non-confrontational, individual 'chats' with each pupil in a quiet room without interruptions – the bullying pupils first
- Get agreement with each that the bullied pupil is unhappy and that they will help improve the situation. Ask them how, but if they can't, tell them
- Chat supportively with the bullied pupil – helping them to understand how to change if thought to have 'provoked' the bullying
- Check progress a week later, then meet all involved to reach agreement on reasonable long term behaviour – at this stage, participants usually cease bullying
- Check whether the bullying starts again or targets another pupil. If bullying persists, combine the method with another action targeted specifically at that child, such as parental involvement.

If bullying persists, exclusion would be the last resort.