Holmer Green First School and Pre-School
Anti-Bullying Policy

RATIONALE

Everyone at Holmer Green First School and Pre-School has the right to feel welcome, secure happy and safe. Our school is committed to actively working to prevent all forms of bullying and ensuring all members of the school community can thrive.

AIMS

1. To ensure that all people (children and adults) in the school community are able to work in an atmosphere free from victimisation, discrimination, harassment and any other form of bullying behaviours.
2. To clarify for all members of the school community that bullying is unacceptable and must be totally discouraged. Everyone must act in a positive way to ensure that bullying is challenged and reported.
3. To value diversity in order to create and maintain a safe and supportive environment.
4. To ensure that all pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and others are aware of this policy and know that appropriate action will be taken.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is repeated behaviour of one or more children which makes other children feel uncomfortable or threatened. Bullying is about power. Victims feel powerless to stop it. Others, such as parents for instance, may feel powerless to know how to help.

Bullying is hurtful, threatening, harmful and disrespectful behaviour REPEATED OVER A PERIOD OF TIME that intentionally hurts individuals or groups either physically or emotionally.

Bullying may be through physical (including sexual), verbal (including online bullying), and emotional (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). Bullying can include behaviours, which hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It can be unprovoked, can continue for a long period of time and is often hidden and subtle.

Bullying is hidden and often victims do not speak about their experience for complex reasons. It can happen anywhere and at any time. At Holmer Green First School and Pre- School, we always treat it very seriously.

Bullying can take many forms, but may be:

- Continually name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments etc.

- Any negative comments, gestures or actions that may or may not be related to disability or special educational needs.
- Any negative comments, gestures or actions related to appearance and health.
- Writing hurtful comments.
- Sexual - unwelcome physical contact, sexually abusive, upskirting or sexist language.
- Taking, hiding or damaging personal belongings.
- Physical - targeted kicking, hitting, pushing, fighting, biting, spitting, pinching, throwing objects or any other forms of physical violence.
- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, gossiping, ridicule, humiliation.
- Verbal - spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, name calling, sarcasm, teasing.
- Cyber Bullying - sending offensive emails or text messages or Whatsapps, creating 'hate websites', name calling and/or offensive language during online games.

Any of these may also have contexts which discriminate in relation to a person's 'protected characteristics' (age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, transgender, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity or socio- economic background). Please see our Equalities and Cohesion Policy.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Pupils may be reluctant to tell anyone they are being bullied, but often there are signs that we can look for:

- Obvious distress, such as tearfulness or persistently looking unhappy.
- Unwillingness to come to school.
- Frequent headaches, stomach aches or complaints of feeling unwell.
- Isolation from other children/not "joining in".
- A sudden deterioration in the standard of work.
- Reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of the day.
- A tendency to stay close to staff during breaks.
- Uncharacteristic behaviour.
- General unhappiness/anxiety/fear.
- Speaking negatively about, or behaving negatively towards themselves.

Bullying is harmful to all involved, not just the bullied, and can result in long-term outcomes of self-doubt, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, self-harm and in extreme cases serious mental health concerns and even suicide.

ACTIONS TO TACKLE BULLYING

At Holmer Green First School and Pre-School we are vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously.

All reports of bullying will be:

- Investigated and taken seriously by staff members.
- Recorded on CPOMS as child-on-child abuse under 'cause for concern' for the Headteacher to investigate.
- Effectively monitored on a regular basis - all incidents and actions are logged.

- The Governing Body will receive a termly report on any bullying incidents in the Headteacher's Report to Governors.

The exact course of action will vary with each situation, but the main objectives will be:

- The bully's behaviour is unacceptable and the bullying must stop.
- If a child feels they are being bullied they can talk to their class teacher or another adult they feel comfortable with.
- The school will work with parents of both the victim and the bully.
- Support will be available for the victim.
- The application of sanctions will depend on the individual circumstances of each incident.
- The school will work with the bully and their family to identify any possible reasons for their behaviour.
- Support will be available for the bully to help change his/her behaviour.
- The parents/carers of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem.
- Any child who needs support with social and friendship skills will be offered help and support in order to learn appropriate social interaction.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS

If you have any concerns that your child may be being bullied at school, please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance. You can arrange a meeting with your child's class teacher by either phoning or emailing the school office.

If the problem persists, or you feel like the matter has not be resolved effectively, please contact the school office to arrange a meeting with the Headteacher.

Although we are not always able to share final outcomes of bullying accusations with parents due to confidentiality, we will share how we plan to address the problem and will outline our next steps.

WHOLE SCHOOL ETHOS

To reinforce the positive ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour we also:

- Prevent and raise awareness of bullying through the curriculum: through PSHE lessons, assemblies and support from playground staff. Anti-bullying lessons are taught within our PSHE lessons rather than as stand-alone weeks.
- At lunch time, there is effective supervision whilst on the playground. We ensure that our playground is stimulating for the children with a range of equipment available, including large, fixed equipment and smaller resources such as bats, balls and hoops.
- We employ sports coaches during the lunch hour to engage the children in meaningful play.

- Online Safety is taught regularly through our computing lessons. This helps to ensure that children remain safe and responsible when working online. Please see our Online Safety Policy.