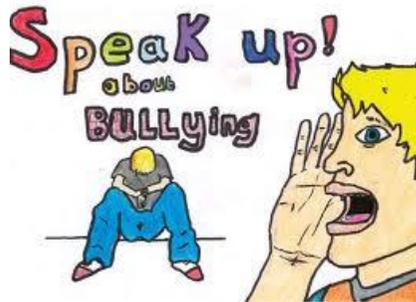




Advice for parents about bullying



November 2017 update

This booklet lets you know the facts about bullying and gives you advice on what to do if your child tells you they are being bullied or if they are demonstrating bullying behaviour or attitudes.

Goldy is our anti-bullying mascot. Each class has a picture of Goldy and the school council regularly update messages from Goldy for our children. Examples of his messages are about making friends eg, 'Smile to show you are friendly,' or messages about they can do eg, 'Say STOP if someone does something you do not like.'



At Christ Church Infant School we strive to create an environment that prevents bullying from being a serious problem in the first place. We aim to create an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.

How do we create an anti-bullying environment?

- All children and staff know the school rules
- Clear rewards and consequences procedure
- Monthly values
- Regular personal, social, health education & circle time
- Positive play training for midday supervisors
- Anti-bullying staff training
- Anti-bullying week
- Restorative justice – All parties are involved in finding a solution to the problem.
- Worry boxes and talking time gives children opportunities to talk about issues or concerns.
- Children's achievements are celebrated to raise self-esteem.
- Children's similarities and differences are celebrated.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, with the intention of hurting another individual or group, either physically or emotionally.

The bullying can be:

- **Physical** - hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings
- **Verbal** - name calling, teasing, insulting, writing or sending unkind notes or messages.
- **Emotional** - being intentionally unfriendly, excluding, tormenting looks, spreading rumours.
- **Cyber** - email and internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text, calls, and social websites.

Why do children bully?

- Not understanding how someone else feels
- Taking out their angry feelings
- Being bullied themselves
- Trying to get admiration and attention from friends
- Low self-esteem

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is unwilling to go to school;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens self-harm;
- cries at night or has nightmares/bedwetting;
- regularly feels ill in the morning;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions go missing;
- has unexplained cuts and bruises;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what is wrong;

What to do if your child tells you they are being bullied or you notice signs and symptoms that they are being bullied

- Always take what your child says seriously. Try not to get angry or upset, listen to what they have to say and ask them how they think it could be dealt with, so they are part of the solution to the problem.
- Praise them for speaking up and getting help.
- Don't tell them to hit or shout back. It won't solve the problem.
- Inform your child's class teacher. The staff are trained how to deal with allegations of bullying and will follow our dealing with bullying procedure.

Good communication

If you are worried that your child is being bullied or may be involved in bullying in some way, contact your child's teacher immediately so they can help to resolve the problems as soon as possible. It may be easily fixed or it may be a longer process that involves other members of staff and other parents. It is important that all parties work together to support the children and stop the bullying. The very nature of bullying is that it happens secretly, deliberately away from parents' and teachers' view. If your child's class teacher is aware of a bullying problem they will contact you so that the problem can be solved together.

Roles within Bullying

Different roles within bullying have been identified:

- Those relying on social power, dominating others, often with group support (ring leader).
- Others joining in and therefore afraid of ring leader (associates).
- The awareness of a silent majority that bullying is taking place, but feeling unable to do anything about it (bystanders).
- Those who try to stop bullying (defenders).
- Victim

During Anti-Bullying Week the children have been taught what to do if they find themselves in the different roles.

What if my child is bullying others?

It may come as a surprise to many parents and carers that their child has been bullying others. There are many reasons why young people bully others: sometimes they are copying someone else, or being encouraged by others, or it may be because they are having problems themselves or haven't learnt appropriate ways of mixing with other children. All children need to be taught how to empathise with the feelings of others. They need to understand that ignoring or encouraging others who are bullying is unacceptable and take responsibility for reporting bullying when it occurs. Talk with your child and explain why their behaviour is wrong, and encourage them to think about the impact of their behaviour on others.