



Working Together to keep our children safe



We hope you enjoyed reading our first safeguarding newsletter last time and found the content interesting;

This issues topic is Bullying

Some resources that might support older children who might be experiencing issues, particularly online are here:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/teachers-and-school-staff/teaching-resources/cyberbullying/cyberbullying-resources>

<https://www.stopspeaksupport.com/>

Chellaston Infant's Safeguarding Team



Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Galley, Headteacher



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Hateley, Learning Mentor



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Leyland, Deputy Headteacher



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Webster, Assistant Headteacher & SENCo



Safeguarding Governor – Mr Ames, Chair of the Governing Board



Deputy Safeguarding Governor – Mrs Baker, Vice Chair of Governing Board

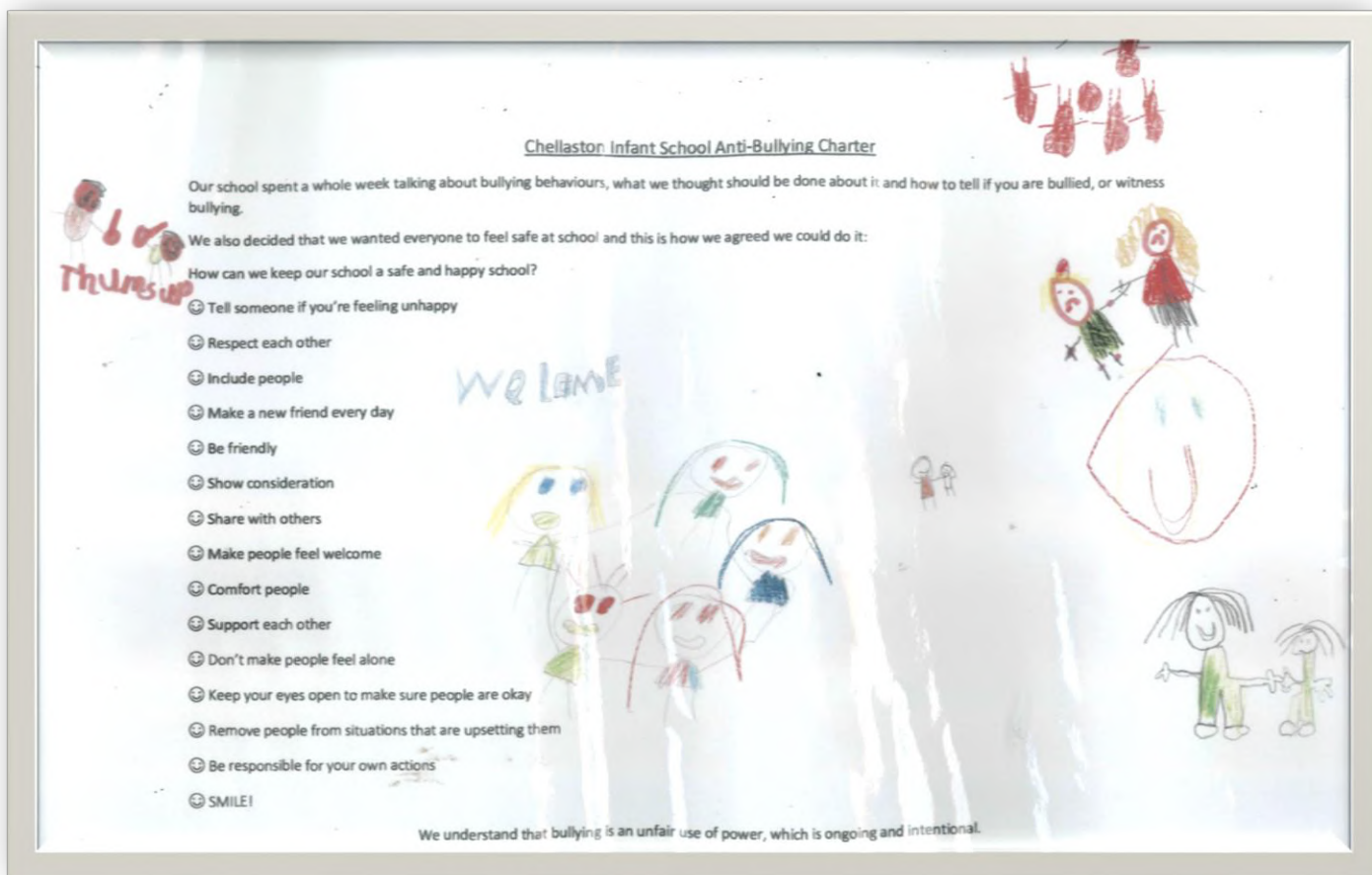


We, as school staff, know that one of your biggest fears about your child being at school may be that they might be bullied; for many of us, as parents ourselves, they are our fears for our own children too. Horrendous stories are reported in the media and, popular TV programmes, highlight the extremes that the problem can manifest itself as, particularly in older children and this heightens our anxiety.

We know that it is our responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur in our school and that our pupils are taught how to build positive relationships with others who may or may not necessarily be their friends. We have a robust policy in place but know that you may not be familiar with this, or, know how you can support us in giving the right messages at home.

Positive steps we've taken

We developed a 'Children's Charter' with School Council this year and it is displayed in each classroom. We have 'Anti-Bullying Ambassadors' on our playgrounds each playtime; the children take their roles very seriously! Our separate Year 1 and Year 2 playtimes mean our playground is less busy than it was, and there is less demand for the play equipment the children use; consequently much more for them to do with their friends. Again, our staggered lunchtimes has minimised the amount of time the whole school is using our play spaces.



So what is bullying?

Well, there isn't a definitive answer but on the whole bullying consists of escalated behaviours beyond "normal" falling out with peers. *It might be useful to "RIP" bullying open....*

- **R stands for "repeated"** Bullying is a repetitive pattern of behaviour. It happens often, even constantly, to the same victim from the same offender or offenders.
- **I stands for "intentional"** If a child bumps into another child in a busy corridor, that isn't necessarily bullying. When that bump happens every day, during every passing period, and the offender knows what he/she is doing, that's bullying because it is done purposefully.
- **P stands for "power"** Bullies like to have power over their victims. They will use repeated, intentional, and even seemingly innocent behaviours to *subtly* assert that power. When a bully purposely and repeatedly bumps into that child in the busy corridor, it can be passed off to a teacher or other adult as accidental, but the bully and his/her victim both know better. The bully has now gained power over the victim.

As teachers, and parents, it's important that we are alert to behaviours that are clearly hostile or could easily become hostile. **But**, it's not appropriate to label every negative interaction that occurs among children as "bullying." To really see bullying, one needs to watch for the subtleties in the exchange that is taking place and document all behaviours to look for a pattern.

So if it's not bullying, what is it?

There are many other types of aggressive behaviour that don't fit the definition of bullying. This does not mean that they are any less serious or require less attention than bullying. Rather, these behaviours require different prevention and response strategies. Your child may be experiencing **peer conflict**; it is not bullying when two children with no perceived power imbalance fight or hurt each other, have an argument, or disagree. Conflict resolution or peer mediation may be appropriate for these situations and it is unhelpful to label this as bullying or either child the "bully".

Early childhood difficulties

Early childhood often marks the first opportunity for young children to interact with each other. During their infant years, children are learning how to get along with each other, cooperate, share, and understand their own feelings. Young children may be aggressive and act out when they are angry or don't get what they want. We would suggest that bullying isn't borne out of anger or frustration with a peer; sadly, it is far more targeted and calculated. Again, this does not mean that the experience isn't real or hurtful and upsetting, and doesn't need to be dealt with seriously, but this is not bullying and labelling children at such a young age is not appropriate. Please remember we are all parents of young children who, at times, struggle to control their emotions but they are not bullies; there may even be an emerging special need contributing to behaviour that others find difficult to understand.

Helping Young Children Get Along with Others

Parents, school staff, and other adults can help young children develop skills for getting along with others in age-appropriate ways.

- Model positive ways for young children to make friends. For example, practice pleasant ways that children can ask to join others in play and take turns in games. Older brothers and sisters can help reinforce these behaviours as well. Praise children for appropriate behaviour. Help young children understand what behaviours are friendly.
- Help young children learn the consequences of certain actions in terms they can understand. For example, say "if you don't share/if you hit/if you shout/if you are bossy/if you always want to be in charge, other children may not want to play with you." Encourage young children to tell an adult if they are treated in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, upset or unhappy, or if they witness other children being harmed.
- Set clear rules for behaviour and monitor children's interactions carefully. Step in quickly to stop aggressive behaviour or redirect it before it occurs.
- Use age-appropriate consequences for aggressive behaviour. Young children should be encouraged to say "I'm sorry" whenever they hurt a peer, even accidentally. The apology should also be paired with an action. For example, young children could help rebuild a knocked over block structure or replace a torn paper or crayons with new ones.

Being a bystander is not OK

Please also reinforce that it is not OK to stand by and let bullying happen; children should be encouraged to talk to an adult in school if they think another child's behaviour is causing someone else regular upset. An attitude that this is OK creates a bullying culture with the bystanders becoming victims of the culture, either by becoming bullies, bullied or accepting the bullying through their silence.

How you can help

We would ask that you keep this information in mind when talking to your child about their falling outs with their friends and when discussing the nature of bullying:

- 1. Bullying is not OK.**
- 2. Letting bullying happen, even if they are not directly involved, is not OK.**
- 3. Being a bully is not OK.**
- 4. That arguments, fallings out and squabbles with peers are normal, they are not bullying.**
- 5. That anything that feels wrong should be told to an adult so that they can help.**

We use the acronym **S.T.O.P** to help the children understand the difference between conflict and bullying. This stands for Several Times On Purpose – as adults, we would encourage you to think of the 'S' and 'T' as Systematic and Targeted over Time.

We do hope you have found the information supportive and we will continue to work with you, and support your children, in ensuring that our school remains a bully-free zone!