



# Milngavie Primary School and EYC

## Conflict Resolution and Bullying Behaviour



### Conflict

If you are in a relationship with another human being, whether it's a good friend or just someone who sits next to you in school, the chances are that you will be in conflict with that person at some point or have already had a conflict with that person. Where there are two people in a relationship, there likely will be disagreements and changes.

One friend might want to play video games; the other might want to go outside. One friend wants to go shopping; the other really doesn't like shopping. Your classmate always wants to be first in line and so do you. Your brothers fight over who has a bigger part of their room, trying to make sure it's exactly the same down to the inch. Things like that happen every day.

Conflict is a natural part of human relationships as people grow and change. Even though it can cause us stress and can hurt, conflict is not bullying. Conflict happens between two people who are equal in the relationship (think: friends or classmates or co-workers) but have two different points of view about what's going on. Sometimes this escalates into a disagreement that's so strong people become really emotional. There might be strong words used and lots of big feelings involved. It may take time to sort things out.

In conflict, when things are equal between people, both sides usually want the issue to be resolved. They don't want the conflict to keep going on; they want to make things better



and they want the relationship to continue in a healthy way. Neither person wants to keep hurting the other, so both people will try to do things to improve the situation. Sometimes, conflict can even be helpful in a relationship that needs to change, providing an opportunity to improve something that's not going right between the parties.

## **Bullying Behaviour**

With bullying, the person (or group of people) who is displaying bullying behaviour means to hurt the other person. The hurt or harm is done on purpose to make the child experiencing bullying behaviour feel like less of a person. There is always something unequal about the relationship between the two people; maybe the person bullying is physically stronger and creates fear because of that, or maybe the person bullying is more popular and has the kind of social power that can turn a whole group against one person.

Whichever type of power a person with bullying behaviour has, they will use it over the person who is being bullied to make them feel less than who they are. Of course, the person who is being bullied does not want this treatment and did nothing to deserve being treated this way.

Bullying scenarios might look like this: Someone convinces a group to tease another pupil based on their looks; someone threatens to hurt a person because of how they talk; somebody posts something untrue and hurtful online about someone else; or someone trips a classmate and makes everyone laugh at the person falling down. The harm is done deliberately and the intent is to cause the other person to suffer in some way.

The bullying behaviour is usually repeated, or threatened to be repeated, over and over. Someone who is displaying bullying behaviour may decide to leave out a friend by giving them the cold shoulder and excluding them from group activities. Someone may use a false statement or other mean word towards another every time they see them, or go on social media in an attempt to damage their reputation. Even the threat of behaviour like this causes unwanted and undeserved upset for the person experiencing bullying behaviour.

## **What is the difference between conflict and bullying?**

- Conflict, while sometimes uncomfortable, can be an opportunity for equal partners in the situation to learn how to solve problems. This will happen by both people working the problem out through healthy and positive means.
- Bullying behaviour is displayed by someone perceived to be more powerful and is unwanted, negative, and meant to cause harm through physically or emotionally damaging means that are repeated or threatened to be repeated.

Remember that conflict between two human beings is normal and is bound to happen. Bullying is not the same as conflict. Bullying is meant to cause hurt or harm. Bullying is not something that anyone deserves to have happen to them and everyone has the right to feel safe in school.



## **Conflict Resolution**

We use restorative approaches to listen to both sides and work towards a solution. Very often it is a Class Teacher who will support children through the process of reconciliation using restorative interventions. A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) may support the Class Teacher in this or offer direct support to the child/ren involved if appropriate.

## **Dealing with bullying behaviour**

Bullying behaviour is not, and should never be, an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up. The success of any anti-bullying policy requires a clear response for schools and guidance on how to prevent, respond to and reduce bullying behaviours.

When talking about bullying, it is important not to label children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Labels can stick for life and can isolate a child, rather than helping them to recover or change their behaviour. All children and young people need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it.

Milngavie Primary has an anti-bullying policy which can be found on the school website. If you formally report bullying behaviour, a member of the SLT will investigate it and will inform you of the outcome.

## **We promote open communication between home and school.**

This is a key strategy which we know works in getting it right for our pupils.

If you have a concern about your own child, do consider the following:

- Phone us at school for a chat: 0141 955 2251
- Email us and we'll get back to you: [office@milngavie.e-dunbarton.sch.uk](mailto:office@milngavie.e-dunbarton.sch.uk)

Useful links for parents and carers:

[www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

[www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

