

Goonhavern Pre-School



Nurture the seed and together we will grow

Goonhavern Early Years

Preventing Bullying Policy

Bullying among young children may look different from bullying among older children.

Bullying is not acceptable in any circumstance, will not be tolerated and will be dealt with immediately.

Parents/carers of a child who has taken part in an act of bullying, and those of the victim, will be informed on the day, and the incident will be recorded on My Concern.

Hurtful pre-bullying behaviours may lead to bullying when they become repetitive and intentional and involve an abuse of power.

Early intervention can prevent pre-bullying behaviours from developing into bullying.

Stopping bullying immediately can prevent it from escalating and spreading.

A definition of bullying

There are many definitions of bullying but at Goonhavern School we consider it to be:

- Deliberately hurtful (including emotional, physical and verbal aggression)
- Repeated over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours.

What particular behaviours should we pay attention to in the Early Years?

• Shouting “Mine!” while grabbing a toy is a typical behaviour of young children that is not usually considered bullying. However, if allowed to be directed repeatedly and intentionally toward a targeted child without intervention, it can lead to verbal and physical forms of bullying.

- Occasionally young children may whisper secrets and call each other funny names. But when whispering spreads rumours or private information, when silly names become hurtful name-calling, and when one child repeatedly becomes the target, these childhood games could be considered bullying.

- Children who say, “You can’t play with me,” may not yet be deliberately excluding selected classmates, but this behaviour can easily develop into relational bullying and escalate into the more sophisticated forms of social exclusion used by other children (e.g., “You can’t be my friend if you’re friends with her”).

- Children’s make-believe play provides opportunities for some children to manipulate and assert power over their playmates. Children who take charge of assigning the roles of mother, father, baby, and dog in a make-believe family are not bullying. But when these children consistently assign one child to play the less desirable roles (e.g., the dog, the baby, or the bad guy), don’t permit playmates to switch roles, and even control the child’s actions (demanding that the child bark, cry, or go to jail), they are deliberately and repeatedly using their power to take advantage of a vulnerable child—this can be a key component of bullying.

We aim to:

- Identify and help all three players in a bullying situation—the bully, the victim, and the bystanders. All children need to develop the social skills necessary to prevent and respond to bullying. Repeated bullying occurs only in early childhood settings that tolerate bullying behaviours and fail to teach social skills:

- Support children who are engaging in bullying style behaviour to stop bullying, engage in more cooperative behaviours, and develop empathy and social problem-solving skills.

- Teach children, who are targets of bullying, how to respond to bullying with assertiveness, rather than by submitting or counter-attacking.

- Teach Bystanders that they have the power to stop bullying and how to use problem-solving strategies to help prevent and stop bullying.

- Talk with young children about bullying. Dealing with bullying directly and openly lets everyone know that bullying is an important concern, that it will not be tolerated, and that everyone needs to work together to stop and prevent it.

- Teach and guide children in practising the social skills they need to help stop and prevent bullying.

- Engage children in activities to develop the social skills they need to help stop and prevent bullying, including empathy, assertiveness, and problem-solving.

- Work to develop and maintain a common vision of a bullying-free environment.

- Prepare to take advantage of teachable moments, and intervene immediately and effectively whenever children engage in what could be considered as pre-bullying and bullying behaviours. Intervention is most effective when it includes all children: children who bully, children who are victims, and children who are bystanders to bullying.

•Engage parents in bullying prevention initiatives by helping them talk to their children about bullying and teach their children social skills for preventing bullying.

At Goonhavern School:

- We never ignore suspected bullying
- We don't make premature assumptions
- We listen carefully to all accounts
- We try to adopt a problem solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves
- We involve parents
- We follow-up at least 3 times in order to check bullying has not resumed

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Next Review: September 2022