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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Children have a right to learn and develop in a safe, friendly, and caring atmosphere. Their childhood should be a time of growth and development and should be free of fear. We are committed to providing such an environment for all of children and this ethos extends to all people in the setting, victims and bullies also have rights which need to be considered. We in no circumstances condone bullying in any form. A definition of bullying is any interaction between an individual (or group of people) with a more powerful individual (or group) which is perceived or intended to cause hurt, pain, suffering or humiliation. Bullying can take many forms; the types are (list not exhaustive):

- Physical - Kicking, hitting, biting, head butting etc.
- Verbal - Name calling.
- Indirectly - Excluding children from social groups.

Our aims/objectives are:

- To prevent bullying from happening in the nursery.
- To maintain a safe and secure environment in which children/adults can speak out against bullying.
- To work in partnership with staff/parents.
- To ensure all members of staff/adults understand their role in combating bullying and adopt this anti-bullying policy.
- To deal with bullying quickly, should it occur.
- To ensure supervision in the environment which is mindful/respectful of a child's need to explore and learn for themselves.
- To positively convey to children that bullying is unacceptable.
- To promote self-esteem and confidence to all children in our care.

We acknowledge and accept a young child of nursery age may demonstrate anti-social behaviour, e.g. - not sharing, this will be challenged, if necessary, in an appropriate way. This behaviour may be appropriate to their stage of development as they develop social skills and relationships. However, if anti-social behaviour is deemed to constitute bullying or any incidents of outright bullying occur it is important to have an anti-bullying policy in place and follow the procedure below.

- If bullying is reported or observed the nursery manager must be informed. If we are not told about an incident and we have not witnessed, it ourselves we cannot address the issue.
- Immediate action will be taken to protect the victim by removing them from the incident. The victim should be kept safe, preventing an escalation of violence, with this behaviour being refocused on the carers.
- Investigate the situation.
- Inform the bully that their behaviour will be dealt with without being specific or threatening.
- Make arrangements to comfort and support the victim (this may include checking whether any injuries have been sustained and check any injuries if necessary), inform the victim that they have the right to complain where appropriate (consider age). Inform the victim that the bullies' behaviour will be dealt with.
- Talk to the bully, tell them that their behaviour is unacceptable, inform the bully what will happen next and who will be informed. Bullies have the right to have their behaviour challenged and be given the chance to change. Do not be confrontational or personally critical instead adopt a matter-of-fact problem-solving approach. Where appropriate, dependent on age and maturity, encourage the child to apologise - this must not be forced and needs to be genuine.
- An incident form will be completed which will form the basis for a discussion with the bullies parents when they collect them. The parents are requested to sign to confirm that they agree with the information on the form. It is good practice to ask for the parent's assistance in the matter, for them to talk to the child about the situation reiterating why it is wrong to bully. The victim's parents will also be told of the incident and the outcome - in no circumstances should either the victim or the bully be named, this is deemed unacceptable.
- In serious cases parents will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem, a company director will be involved.
- If the child further bullies or the bullying is very serious, we may seek external advice. The parents could be asked to remove their child from the nursery if all else has failed to deter them from bullying. We do not take this decision lightly but have a duty to protect all of those in our care.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with the case will be evaluated and the anti-bullying policy reviewed.
- Age-appropriate methods of educating the children about bullying, e.g. - using stories, simple role play or puppets, will be used in the nursery. Discussions about bullying will also be used to explain the issue and educate children in a positive way.