





Understanding bullying:

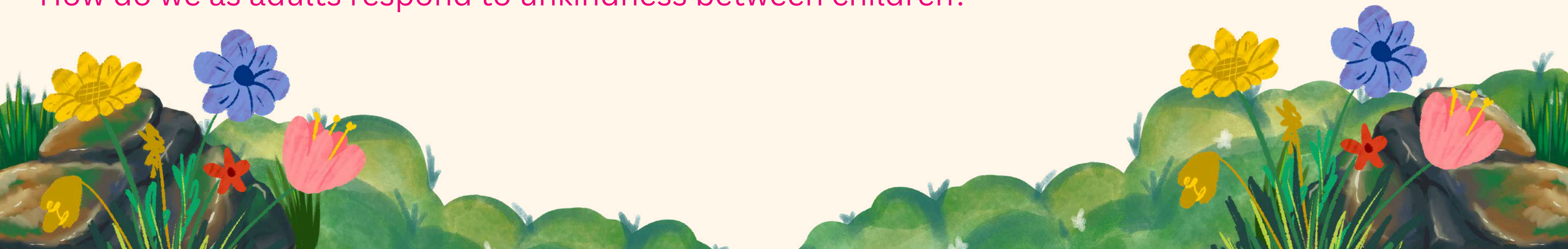
Working together to build a kind and respectful school community



Building a kind and respectful community:

- Every child deserves to feel safe, valued and included.
- At USI we promote our five school values through class dojo, PSED, assemblies, themed days and restorative reflection time - education is key
- Our aim is not to only to respond to bullying but prevent it through positive relationships and education
- Children are still developing their social skills, emotional regulation and understanding of relationships
- Disagreements, friendship difficulities and occasional unkindness are part of growing up.
- Our responsibility is to teach children how to navigate these situations while recognising and addressing genuine bullying.

How do we as adults respond to unkindness between children?



What is bullying?

- Intentional harm - hurt, humiliate, intimidate or exclude another person
- Repetition - happens repeatedly
- Power imbalance - one child has greater physical, social or psychological power making it difficult for the other child to defend themselves.

Types of bullying?

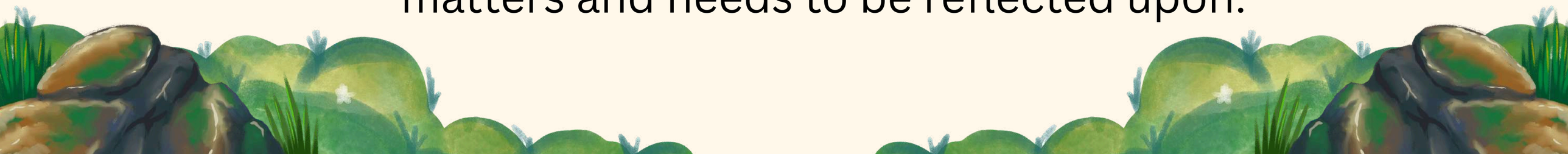
Physical - hitting, kicking, damaging belonging
Verbal - repeated name calling, threats, insults or humiliation
Social - deliberately and repeatly excluding someone, spreading rumours or damaging friendships
Cyberbullying - harmful behaviour through messages, gaming platforms and social media



Bullying vs Conflict vs Unkind Behaviour

Conflict	One-Off Meanness	Bullying
Children disagree or argue.	A child says or does something hurtful.	A child is repeatedly targeted or intimidated.
Both children may contribute.	An isolated incident.	Usually involves a power imbalance.
Both may feel upset.	Can be deliberate or impulsive.	The targeted child may struggle to defend themselves.
Children may need support to resolve it.	Requires correction and accountability.	Requires investigation, intervention and ongoing monitoring.

Not every unkind incident is bullying, but every unkind incident matters and needs to be reflected upon.



How do we respond to bullying?

Our approach: Listen, Investigate, Support and Monitor

Listen:

- Take every concern seriously
- Give children opportunities to explain what has happened

Investigate:

- Speak to children involved individually
- Gather factual accounts from pupils and staff
- Review relevant information including CCTV where appropriate
- Identify whether the incident involves conflict, unkindness or bullying.

Respond:

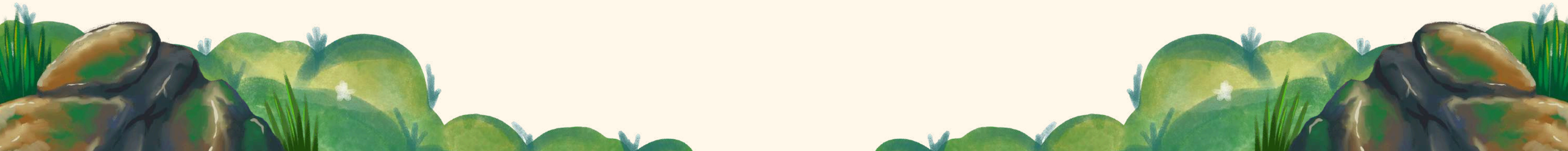
- Appropriate consequences in line with our behaviour policy
- Communication with parents
- Restorative approach
- Support measures for bully and victim
- Log on our internal safeguarding platform CPOMS
- Adults to be aware for monitoring

Monitor:

Check ins with the children

Wellbeing coach support

Communication with families/support



Every child needs support - but not always the same support

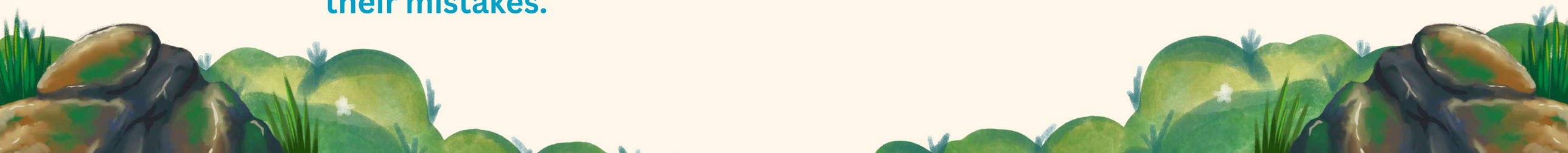
Child experiencing bullying:

- Ensure they feel safe and listened to.
- Rebuild confidence and self-esteem.
- Identify trusted adults
- Provide emotional and pastoral support
- Help rebuild positive peer relationships
- Monitor their wellbeing

Child displaying bullying behaviour:

- Address behaviour and apple appropriate consequences
- Help them to understand the impact of their actions
- Teach empathy, kindness and emotional regulation
- Explore underlying reasons for their behaviour without excusing it
- Develop healthier ways of managing friendships and conflict
- Monitor behaviour

We must hold children accountable for their behaviour without defining them by their mistakes.



Your child says they're being bullied - What next?

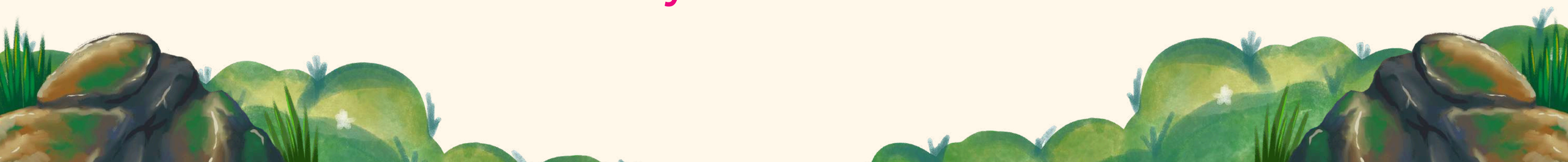
DO:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully
- Reasure them
- Ask questions (open ended)
- Record important information including dates and incidents
- Contact the class teacher
- Keep checking in with your child

AVOID:

- Immediately assume the full circumstances
- Contact or confront another child
- Confront other parents
- Encourage your child to retaliate
- Label another child as a bully before an investigation
- Promise complete secrecy when adults may need to help

It's natural to become upset when your child is hurt, however adult reactions can sometimes unintentionally escalate situations between children.



Getting children talking - ask, don't assume:

Instead of asking:

''Was Amy being horrible to you today?''

Ask:

What was the best part of your day?
Was there anything that made you feel unconfortable todayy?
Who did you enjoy spending time with?

Can you tell me what happened from the beginning?
What happened just before that?
How did you feel when that happened?
What did you do next?
How did the other children respond?

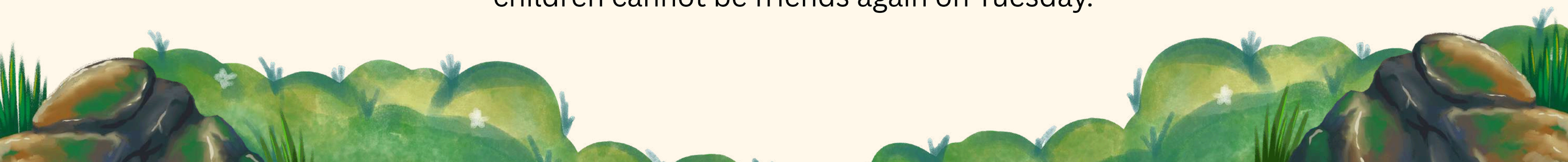
Kindness begins with us - children learn what they see:

Children learn how to treat others by watching the adults around them:

As adults we can:

- Speak respectfully about other people even when we disagree
- Avoid describing other children as mean, naughty or bullies in front of your child
- Avoid encouraging children to dislike, exclude or turn against other children because they have made a mistake or many mistakes.
- Encourage children to consider how their words and actions make others feels
- Encourage friendships beyond established groups and help children welcome others
- Show children that disagreements can be handled calmly and respectfully.
- Apologise when you made a mistake and demonstrate how to put it right.

Sometimes without realising it, adults can make childrens friendship difficulities more complicated e.g. telling children not to play with certain classmates or discssing other families in front of them risk creating divisions that may not have exsisted otherwise. Children are still learning, a disagreement on Monday does not mean two children cannot be friends again on Tuesday.



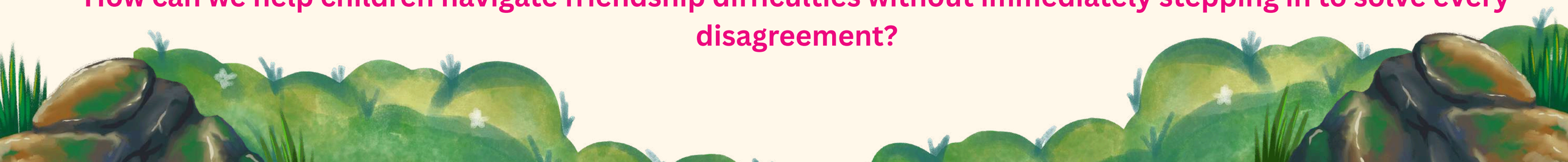
Raising children to be kind, confident and resilient

At school and at home we want children to learn:

Recognise the difference between unkindness and bullying
Communicate their feelings confidently
Set healthy boundaries
Say stop when someone makes them uncomfortable
Know when to seek adult support
Understand that not everyone has to be their best friend
Accept that friendships sometimes change
Resolve minor disagreements respectfully
Stand up for others safely
Include others who may feel left out

Children don’t have to be friends with everyone but they do need to treat everyone with respect.

How can we help children navigate friendship difficulties without immediately stepping in to solve every disagreement?



Together, we can make a difference

Our commitment at USI

Take concerns seriously
Investigate fairly and thoroughly
Prioritise childrens safety
Address innapropriate behaviour
Support all children involved
Promote kindness, inclusion and respect
Maintain open comminication with families

Our ask of parents

Keep communication open with your child
Model respectful behaviour
Encourage empathy and inclusion
Avoid fueling friendship disagreements
Report concerns promptly
Trust the investigation process while asking questions and sharing information

