Anti-Bullying Policy

July 2025
Review July 2026

Reviewed on:	July 2025
Reviewed by:	Alison Goode
Date of next review:	July 2026

NB: This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, Allegations of abuse against staff policy, Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and Equality Statement.

ANTI_BULLYING POLICY

What is bullying?

This policy conforms to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and guidance from the Anti-Bullying Alliance (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk).

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally for any reason by intimidating or demeaning others. This includes cyber or real-time bullying. It is usually behaviour that is deliberate and persistent and is an attempt to hold more power than another individual or group. It is often carried out covertly and is usually a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone.

Bullying can be racist, homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying as well as ageist and sexist bullying and all other forms of discrimination. These behaviours are unacceptable and we aim to teach students, staff and families how to address these behaviours, the damage they cause to the bullied and the perpetrator of bullying and the importance of good role models and safe and supported debate.

As an organisation, we recognise that technological advances pose an increased risk of cyber bullying and therefore strive to teach all students about responsible use of social media and the internet. It is vital, however, that parents and carers support us in our endeavours to educate their children about respect for others, both physically and virtually.

Bullying can be:
- Physical – such as hitting or physically intimidating someone or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact towards someone.
- Emotional – such as isolating an individual or spreading rumours about them.
- Attacking property – such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone's possessions.
- Verbal – such as name calling, mocking, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language or threatening someone.
- Psychological – such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people.
- Cyber – where technology is used to hurt an individual – e.g. texting or posting messages/images on social media or the internet.
- Sexual – where someone makes unwanted physical contact or makes sexually abusive comments.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:
- Race (racist bullying) - when it is motivated by racial, ethnic or cultural prejudice.
- Religion or belief.
- Culture or class.

- Transphobic – when it is motivated by a prejudice against people who identify as trans.
- Sexual orientation (homophobic or bi-phobic) – when it is motivated by a prejudice against gay, lesbian or bisexual people.
- Special educational needs or disability.
- Appearance or health conditions.
- Related to home or other personal situation.
- Sexist – relating to the gender of a person.
- Ageist – relating to the age of a person.
- Related to another vulnerable group of people.

This is not an exhaustive list.

It should also be noted that bullying can occur as student on student, student on staff, staff on student or staff on staff and must not be complacent in any case. Any cases of physical or sexual harm from one child to another should be managed in line with the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.

Ethos / prevention

At our schools we foster an ethos of respect where school staff develop trusting relationships with students based on mutual respect and time to listen and discuss. We believe this ethos addresses the issue of bullying before it has even begun by creating an atmosphere that is automatically against bullying. We have an Equality and Diversity Policy that builds on the idea of addressing difference and acceptance of others both in and out of school. Regular contact with parents and carers reinforces the idea that bullying is no more acceptable at home and in the wider environment than it is in school.
We believe this ethos reduces the chances of bullying by making it clear to students that it is not an acceptable way to behave at any time and that, if bullying does occur, it will be dealt with immediately and comprehensively focussing on both the recipient and perpetrator of the behaviour.

All this said, we recognise that we do not exist in a vacuum. The media (including social media), politics, fashion, youth culture, drugs and county lines, music, religion, ethnicity, peer groups and siblings all have a huge influence on young people and debate is the key to helping them to recognise the behaviours that constitute bullying and the real issues behind divisive influences on communities and peer groups. To this end we do not seek to indoctrinate, but to protect our young people from indoctrination through debate, facts and education in a safe environment where opinions are discussed and respect is nurtured and modelled.

School is a place where every person has the right to be themselves and to be in a safe and happy environment. Everyone at our school is equal and should be treated with respect.

Warning signs that may indicate someone is being bullied

- Changes in academic/working performance.
- Apparent anxiety, not usual for that person.

- Regularly feeling sick or unwell, reluctance to come to school or work, or regular absence where there was none before.
- Clothing or belongings torn or damaged.
- Money or possessions going missing.
- Unexplained injuries (refer to safeguarding policy for injuries to children).
- Unexplained or unusual changes in behaviour, such as mood swings, bad temperedness, tearfulness, unhappiness.
- Loss of appetite, not sleeping, weight loss.
- Not very talkative.
- Change in work patterns.
- Sudden shyness and nervousness.
- Clinging to adults/colleagues.

Reporting bullying

Students who are being bullied:
If a student is being bullied, they are encouraged not to retaliate but to tell someone they trust about it such as a friend, family member or trusted adult. They are also encouraged to report any bullying incidents in school, whether these have been directed at them or at another student:
- To a member of staff.
- To a school friend.
- By texting, emailing, phoning or speaking directly to someone.
- Calling Childline to speak with someone in confidence on 0800 1111.

Students can feel confident that in reporting bullying they will have:

1) The immediate offer of a discussion with a mentor regarding the issues they are facing.
2) Reassurance that the issue will be taken seriously.
3) Continuous support.
4) Support to regain their self-esteem and confidence from school staff.

Reporting – roles and responsibilities

Staff:
All school staff, both teaching and non-teaching (for example student mentors or admin) have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in the school's efforts to prevent bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the students/staff involved and inform a relevant member of the management team.

All staff are able to handle the issue initially (unless there is another staff member involved in the bullying, in which case please refer to the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy) but if it is felt to be appropriate this should be dealt with by the senior staff or the Deputy DSL in the school. If it is felt appropriate there should be a record of concern logged. All records of concern will be managed in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Senior Staff:
The Senior Leadership Team and the Headteacher have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Anti-Bullying Policy is followed by all members of staff and that the school upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all young people. In addition to this, Alison Goode, DSL, is the Operational Senior Leader responsible for anti-bullying. The Headteacher has overall accountability for anti-bullying.

Parents and Carers:
Parents and carers should look out for potential signs of bullying such as those listed above. Parents and carers should tell their child not to retaliate and support and encourage them to report the bullying. Parents and carers can report an incident of bullying to the school either in person, or by phoning or emailing the school office or a member of staff.

Students:
Students should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for potential signs of bullying among their peers. They should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying. If students witness bullying, they should support the victim, encourage them to report the bullying and, if possible, accompany them to tell a trusted adult.

Responding to bullying

When bullying has been reported, the following actions will be taken:
• Staff will record the bullying on an incident reporting form and also record the incident centrally on the cloud (via Paula).
• Therapeutic leads and Brett Runchman will monitor incident reporting forms and information recorded on the cloud analysing and evaluating the results.
• Support will be offered to those who are the target of bullying by school staff.
• Staff will pro-actively respond to the bully, who may require support, or through the use of a restorative justice programme.
• Staff will assess whether parents and carers need to be involved.
• Staff will assess whether any other authorities (such as police or the local authority) need to be involved, particularly where actions take place outside of school.

Bullying outside of school

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during the holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber bullying in particular means that it can impact on students' well-being beyond the school day. Staff, parents and carers, and students must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of

bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored on the cloud through notifying Paula Stacey and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for students and staff found using any such language. Staff are also encouraged to record the casual use of derogatory language using informal mechanisms such as a classroom log.

Prejudice-based incidents

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the head teacher regularly reporting incidents to the senior management team. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

School initiatives to prevent and tackle bullying

We use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:
- A student – friendly anti-bullying poster displayed in each school.
- Childline posters in each room in each school.
- An ongoing RSHE programme through all work looking at good role models and encouraging discussion and debate including using items in the news.
- Reflection time for all students.
- Difference and diversity are celebrated across the organisation through displays, books and images (see Equality and Diversity Policy for more information).
- The school values of equality and respect are embedded across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible.
- Stereotypes are challenged by all staff and students across the schools.
- Restorative justice programmes provide support to bullies and their victims.
- Working with parents and carers and in partnership with community programmes wherever possible.

Training

All our staff are involved in training to develop reflective plans and processes and to promote trust and respect across the curriculum and the whole school day. Policies are reviewed annually and each member of staff re-acquaints themselves with the reviewed policy annually.

Monitoring and Review

The Directors and DSL will review this policy on an annual basis.