



# Anti-Bullying Policy

This review: Oct 2024

Approved by Full Governing Body:

Next Review: Oct 2025

## Aims

- We will use preventative measures to reduce the occurrence of bullying.
- All children, staff and parents/carers know what steps to take to deal with bullying when it occurs.
- Incidents of bullying will be dealt with effectively and promptly.

## Definitions

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

(DfE, gov.uk)

Bullying can sometimes be mistaken for relational conflict. The differences are summarised here.

Relational conflict	Bullying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Happens occasionally</li><li>• Accidental</li><li>• Equal Power</li><li>• Remorse</li><li>• Effort to solve problem</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repeated hurtful behaviour</li><li>• Deliberate</li><li>• Imbalance of power</li><li>• No remorse</li><li>• No effort to solve problem</li></ul>

(Essex Schools Infolink)

## **Measures aimed at preventing bullying**

Through the positive ethos of our school, the planned curriculum, regular focus in assemblies and when dealing with incidents of unwanted behaviour, we will support children to:

- Understand what bullying is and the effects it has.
- Understand the difference between bullying and relational conflict.
- Be actively involved in anti-bullying initiatives such as anti-bullying week.
- Learn the skills needed to remain safe while using technology such as e-mail, internet, mobile phones and social media.
- Know strategies to report and deal with bullying.
- Feel confident that when they tell an adult, there will be action taken to deal with the situation.
- Recognise and value our differences and respect others' feelings and beliefs.
- Understand that prejudice and hatred is not acceptable, whether such opinions are homophobic, transphobic, racist, targeted at faith, sexist or disability.
- Value themselves and their achievements and develop strong self-esteem.
- Practise and develop emotional resilience and social skills to manage their feelings and work with others to resolve conflict calmly and correctly.
- Recognise and reward positive behaviour and enable children to reflect, repair and restore when they make the wrong choice.

## **Dealing with incidents of bullying**

Advice to children who are experiencing potential bullying:

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Be firm and clear and tell them to stop what they are doing / saying.
- Get away from the situation as quickly as you can.
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away (an adult at school in the first instance, or an adult at home).
- Not blame yourself for what has happened.

Advice to children who witness potential bullying:

- Don't ignore, don't laugh and don't join in.
- Be firm and clear and tell them to stop what they are doing / saying.
- Help the child being bullied to get away.
- Don't try to sort the issue yourself.
- Tell an adult in school what has happened straight away.
- Support the person who has been bullied.

Advice to parents and carers who are worried their child is experiencing bullying:

- Talk to your child calmly about it and reassure the child that telling you about it was the right thing to do.
- Make a note of what your child says.
- Encourage the child to problem solve the situation, rather than apportion blame.

- Don't tell the child to hit back – this will be different to the advice and expectations in school and is likely to make your child feel more distressed about the situation.
- Explain that the child should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff straight away.
- Make an appointment to see the child's teacher as soon as possible and work positively with the teacher – we are here to help and know it is a worrying time for you.
- Be aware that any negative view of a child or their family expressed in front of your child, to other parents or on social media can inflame a situation and put both children at risk of further harm or emotional stress.
- Be aware that trying to sort the situation with another parent directly will often lead to conflict and make the situation more difficult for the children, families and staff involved.
- Report your concerns to the Headteacher or Deputy Head Teacher and work positively with them, if you are worried the teacher's strategies are not leading to a positive outcome.

#### Advice to parents/carers if your child has been accused of bullying

- Talk to your child and explain that bullying is wrong and can have lasting effects on others.
- Encourage your child to problem solve the situation, rather than apportion blame.
- Consider whether a sanction at home, such as loss of privileges, is suitable in the circumstances.
- Talk to your child about how to join in with others without bullying.
- Talk to your child regularly about how things are going at school.
- Give your child recognition and encouragement when they are being kind and considerate to others.
- Inform the school if you have further concerns about your child's behaviour or would like to discuss any underlying mental health or SEND need, or if current / previous experiences may be affecting behaviour.
- Be aware that any negative view of a child or their family expressed in front of your child, other parents or on social media can inflame a situation and put both children at risk of further harm or emotional stress.

#### All staff members will:

- Report incidents of conflict to the class teacher, so that the class teacher has an overview of on-going concerns.
- Deal with incidents of conflict according to the Behaviour Policy.

#### Class teachers will:

- Look for patterns where behaviours appear to be repeated, hurtful and deliberate and where there is an imbalance of power, no remorse and no effort to solve the problem. Where this appears to be the case, make a note on CPOMS and agree next steps with Head / Deputy immediately.
- Where concerns are raised by children or parents/carers, listen to the concerns and reassure that the concern will be investigated and next steps put in place. Record concerns on CPOMS, alert Head and Deputy and agree next steps with Head / Deputy immediately.
- Take all concerns seriously, even where you do not feel that bullying is taking place and that this is more likely to be relational conflict – steps still need to be taken to prevent this.
- Communicate with all parents/carers of children involved and follow up with further communication in a timely manner.

- Communicate the issue with other key members of staff in school – LSA, cover staff, Rainbow Room, MDA.
- Escalate the concern to the Head / Deputy where your strategies are not leading to a positive outcome.

The Head / Deputy will:

- Give advice on next steps which are in line with this policy, when a staff member reports concerns about bullying. Record this advice on CPOMS.
- Where a parent or carer reports potential bullying, listen to the concerns and pass this to the class teacher in the first instance and record on CPOMS.
- Where the parent/carers is escalating their concern, as the teacher's strategies are not leading to a positive outcome, work with the parents, teacher and children to put in place different strategies to deal with the situation.
- Where the bullying is of a very serious nature, the Head / Deputy will take immediate action themselves rather than pass it to the teacher (e.g. there is a high level of physical harm or sexual abuse involved). Put next steps in place. Record concerns on CPOMS.
- Communicate with all parents/carers of children involved and follow up with further communication in a timely manner.
- Communicate the issue with other key members of staff in school – class teacher, LSA, cover staff, Rainbow Room, MDA.
- Consider what support needs to be put in place for both/all children and suitable sanctions.
- Use outside professionals to assist the school where complex or difficult issues are present.
- Ensure that staff training is timely, relevant and seeks to ensure consistency of approach; ensure that staff model respect in all their dealings with children and do not abuse their power.
- Monitor and report bullying incidents to the Governing Body and gather relevant data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy, systems and processes.

Governors will:

- Support and challenge the school in how they carry out the Anti-bullying Policy.
- Scrutinise the termly data on bullying.
- Question school leaders on incidents of bullying and how these were resolved, in order to understand the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy, systems and processes.
- Challenge school leaders where ParentView outcomes suggest any concern over school approaches to bullying.

## **Strategies to deal with bullying**

The class teacher, Head and/or Deputy will decide which of the following strategies will be used when there is an allegation of bullying:

### **1. Pupil log**

Where a pupil or parent/carers has identified that a child is having difficulties, teachers can set up Pupil Logs in order to monitor the situation and provide additional support. These are usually in place for a period of three weeks and involve an adult 'checking in' with the child three times a day (usually after breaktime, lunchtime and end of the afternoon) and recording how they are feeling. Where the child reports a concern, this will be followed up and action taken. The logs are copied and a copy sent home

to the parents/carers on a weekly basis. This is a useful method of gathering the views of a child who finds it hard to report incidents and to build a shared awareness of patterns of behaviour.

## 2. Mediation by adults

Members of staff can adopt a problem-solving approach, which encourages pupils to find solutions rather than simply justifying themselves and can help establish ground rules between children to help them co-exist in school.

## 3. Playground Buddies

This involves assigning selected pupil volunteers to be vigilant at breaks and dinner times and to support and/or befriend pupils who are being bullied or having difficulties or just need someone to talk to or play with. This may be because they are new to the school or upset by an event outside school, or that there is something difficult taking place in school. The objective is to give the befriended pupil someone to talk to and to help them feel more positive about themselves. Playground buddies wear high vis purple tabards to identify themselves. Elections take place in classes on a termly basis to elect one member of each class to be a Playground Buddy.

## 4. Circle of Friends

A small number of pupils form a circle of friends for a vulnerable pupil, to help improve the pupil's level of inclusion and acceptance and to increase insight into his or her feelings and behaviour. The other children in the circle help by reporting anything of concern to a member of staff.

## 5. Support Groups

The support group includes those who may have been involved in the bullying and other children in the friendship group or class. The aim is to talk about weekly targets to help resolve the problem. Support groups may also be used when friends repeatedly fall out. This may lead to an imbalance of power which makes one child or both children feel that bullying is occurring. In this case, the support group could be used to work on repairing the relationship and encouraging children to build skills of empathy, resilience and problem solving so that the situation can be resolved.

## 6. Behaviour agreement

The children work with an adult in school to draw up an agreement using our school values (Ambition, Integrity, Respect).

## 7. Social Skills groups/Nurture groups

Teaching and activities in these groups can cover:

- Making assertive statements
- Resisting manipulation and threats
- Dealing with name calling
- Staying calm in difficult situations
- Getting help from others
- Boosting self esteem.

## 8. Family Support Worker intervention

Where appropriate to do so, the school will direct the Family Support Worker to make contact with the parents and provide support with parenting/setting boundaries/etc.

## 9. Sanctions will be used, according to the Behaviour Policy.

10. Alternate play and lunchtimes – where we believe that the noise and busy-ness of the playground is affecting a child's behaviour choices because they are feeling overwhelmed or over-stimulated, we will arrange for them to take their breaks with additional one-on-one supervision on the playground or

spend the time away from the playground in a different supervised space. The adult will take the opportunity to work on turn-taking, empathy and social understanding during this time.

### **Where the strategies above are not successful, or where there is a risk of significant harm**

According to the DfE's 2017 report, Preventing and Tackling Bullying, when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the Head / Deputy will discuss their concerns with the local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action.

If pupils do not respond to strategies to combat bullying, we will:

- Put the child 'on report' to the Head / Deputy – they will bring the report to their office up to 3 times a day.
- Internal exclusion, where the child works away from the class for a set time and does not go out to play with other children.
- Fixed period suspension from school.
- In the case of provable, persistent and violent bullying we will consider permanently excluding the perpetrator.

### **Bullying and Special Educational Needs / Disability**

Research shows that children with SEND are more vulnerable to bullying. We are aware of this and aim to ensure that all children are considered when planning our preventative measures and are able to report any incidents of bullying, despite their additional needs.

We are also aware that some children who have additional needs are accused of bullying. It may be the case that children:

- Have developing language and social skills and do not yet know how to communicate in an acceptable way.
- Have sensory needs which may lead to a meltdown.
- Have a very fixed view of right and wrong which might lead them to taking matters into their own hands when others are making the wrong choices.
- Are impulsive and so do not consider the consequence of their actions.

Where it appears to be the case that any child has these needs, we will put in place a Self-Regulation Plan and support the development of the skills they need, whilst also using the strategies listed previously, including sanctions where necessary.

### **Bullying which takes place outside school and Online**

We will investigate allegations of bullying outside of the school premises or online and use the same strategies as detailed in this policy, where the bullying can be proven.