



Mercenfeld Primary  
School

# Anti-Bullying Policy

January 2024

Review: January 2025

# 1. Context

## 1.1 Aims and objectives.

At Mercenfeld Primary School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does happen, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with quickly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell someone that they trust.

The aims of this policy are to:

- create an environment in which everyone agrees that bullying is unacceptable
- establish an agreed definition of bullying, so it may be distinguished from relational conflict
- outline how we involve the whole school community to developing an Anti-bullying ethos
- detail how we respond to instances of bullying behaviour.

The objectives of this policy are that:

- all members of the local advisory board, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- all members of the local advisory board, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- all pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.

## 1.2 Defining Bullying

At our school we define bullying as:

Repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face to face or online. (Antibullying Alliance)

Our school council's definition of bullying is: Deliberately targeting someone because of their differences, several times on purpose. It is more than just banter.

To help our children understand what bullying is and what they should do if they, or anyone they know, experiences bullying we use the mnemonic **STOP**

<b>S</b> everal	<b>S</b> tart
<b>T</b> imes	<b>T</b> elling
<b>O</b> n	<b>O</b> ther
<b>P</b> urpose	<b>P</b> eople



Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered as bullying, including: teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, disability or special educational needs.

Bullying behaviour may be:

- Physical- for example pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching
- Verbal – for example name-calling, teasing, belittling, threatening
- Indirect/Emotional – for example cyberbullying, spreading rumours, exclusion, secret sharing, damaging belongings
- Cyberbullying – for example sending nasty messages, posting unkind content online, sharing photos or videos

These different forms of bullying may occur separately or coexist.

Signs:

A child may show that he or she is being bullied. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Doesn't want to go to school
- Becomes very quiet, worried or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens self-harm/suicide or runs away
- Cries to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do less well in school
- Comes home with clothes torn
- Has possessions missing
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or younger siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong

We know that experiencing bullying can have a significant, negative and lasting impact on a child's physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. We also recognise the negative impact that engaging in bullying behaviours or witnessing the bullying of another can have.

### 1.3 Inclusion

We are aware of our responsibilities under the [Equality Act 2010](#) to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.



We are aware that perpetrators may use the nine protected characteristics as the basis of their bullying in particular:

**Racial, religious, cultural bullying** - where the motivation for bullying is based on the targets skin colour, culture, nationality or faith.

**SEN and disability bullying** - where an individual or group are targeted because of a special educational need or disability which includes learning difficulties, sensory impairments and mental health conditions.

**Appearance or health conditions** – where an individual or group are targeted because of their physical appearance or a health condition for example a disfigurement, a traumatic injury, severe skin condition.

**Home circumstance** – where the motivation for bullying is based on the person’s living arrangements for example: young carers, children in care or geographic locality i.e. where they live.

**Homophobic and Biphobic bullying** – relates to a person’s sexual orientation. It is based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian, gay or bi people. Individuals or groups can be targeted because of their actual or perceived sexuality. People who have lesbian, gay or bi family members can also be targeted as can students who do not conform to gender stereotypes.

**Transphobic bullying** – relates to gender identity. It is based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views or beliefs about trans people. Transphobic bullying affects people who are trans but can also affect those questioning their gender identity as well as people who are not trans but do not conform to gender stereotypes.

**Sexual bullying** – can relate to the target’s gender or body, this can have a sexual and/or sexist element.

## 1.4 Safeguarding

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) states that all staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that child-on-child abuse includes bullying, both on and offline. When staff have concerns about child-on-child abuse, this information is shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

### Staff bullying children:

All staff should be aware of the possibility of members of staff bullying children. Should anyone suspect that this is taking place this should be reported to the head teacher, who will investigate the situation immediately, in order to protect both parties. If the head teacher is suspected of bullying, the matter should be reported to Nicola Harwood (Director of Education). If false allegations are found to be made against staff, the head teacher should refer to the Behaviour Policy.

### Staff bullying staff:

Grievances about inappropriate behaviour are best resolved promptly and as near to the point of origin as possible. This policy (alongside our whistleblowing policy), actively encourages employees to raise issues and try to resolve them with their head teacher, in the belief that the sooner these workplace concerns can be resolved, the quicker all parties will be able to resume normal working. Employees will be given the opportunity to explain their concerns and be listened to. Where the Head teacher is concerned about an employee’s behaviour in relation to other employees or third parties, they should follow the Trust’s (including the HR department) protocols to address this issue. Employees will not be victimised for raising a behaviour related grievance or for supporting a colleague to raise a concern. All parties involved in a grievance have a responsibility to attend meetings, provide honest and factual information, act with integrity and respect. If the head teacher is suspected of bullying, the matter should be reported to Nicola Harwood (director of education) or Lauren Gray (director of HR)

For further information about how we fulfil our statutory safeguarding duties please see the appendix for relevant policies.

## **2. Involving the Whole school Community**

### 2.1 Development of the Policy

This policy has been developed by the PSHE lead, Head teacher and school council.

Further consultation will be carried out when the policy is reviewed, which happens yearly.

## 2.2 Engaging with Pupils

We will involve pupils in the evaluation and development of the Anti-Bullying Policy in ways appropriate to their age.

- We will obtain pupils' views (including single sex groups) about which parts of school feel safe to them and how pupils could be helped to feel safer in school
- We will ask pupils to reflect on their learning and set goals for future learning
- We will consult pupils (e.g. through School Council) about their perception of the strengths of our Anti-Bullying provision and the areas to be further developed.

## 2.3 Communicating with Parents/carers

Parents/carers are the first educators of their children about relationships, emotions, empathy and respect and we seek to work in partnership with parents/carers in our approach to Anti-Bullying. We will encourage this partnership by:

- Sharing details of our Anti-Bullying policy on our website
- Promoting our definition of bullying, so that all members of the school community are aware of it.
- Informing parents/carers by newsletter of forthcoming Anti-Bullying topics, which are predominantly taught through our PSHE curriculum, e.g. Diversity and Communities, Personal Safety
- Informing parents/carers about our Anti-Bullying approach as their child joins the school (through the school website)
- Signposting parents/carers to sources of support to help them address the needs of their child if their child has been affected by, is engaging in, or has witnessed bullying behaviours.

# 3. Anti-bullying – a preventative curriculum

## 3.1 Principles

This Anti-Bullying Policy is set within the wider context of the school's overall aims and values

We recognise that effective preventative education can reduce the risk of bullying behaviour occurring. We know that children learn about skills which contribute to their ability to build and sustain healthy relationships in a wide variety of ways, not only through planned lessons, but through their everyday experiences at school and at home. Our school ethos, wider enrichment opportunities and the interventions and support offered all contribute to the development of these skills. All members of staff understand their role in supporting our strong anti-bullying culture.

## 3.2 Curriculum Organisation

In accordance with the DfE statutory requirements for Relationships Education and Health Education (2020), pupils will learn:

- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help (*Respectful Relationships-Relationships Education*).
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing (*Mental Wellbeing-Health Education*).
- that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health (*Internet Safety and Harms – Health Education*).

We will primarily use the [Cambridgeshire Primary Personal Development Programme](#) and the resources recommended within it when planning and delivering PSHE with an Anti-Bullying focus .

Topic areas which support learning about Anti-Bullying are:

- Diversity and Communities - learning about the breadth of different family structures, lifestyles, religions and cultures and understanding how to show respect and celebrate difference.
- Family and Friends - learning skills for developing and sustaining healthy friendships, including how to apply principles of mutuality, equality, respect and loyalty across different types of relationships
- Personal Safety - learning how to recognise when they are feeling unsafe, and how to ask for help and support.

Anti-Bullying will be taught via:

- PSHE through designated lessons, circle time, participation in Anti-bullying week, other focused events and themed weeks,
- Other curriculum areas, especially *English, RE and computing, topic*
- Enrichment activities

For further information about our PSHE Curriculum, including how we select appropriate teaching resources, see our Relationships Education Policy.

### 3.3 Teaching Methodologies

We apply the same principles when teaching about Anti-Bullying as in our wider PSHE teaching and deploy the same range of methodologies. For more information about our PSHE teaching methodologies see our Relationships Education Policy.

We recognise that there will be some children within the school who have previously or are currently affected by bullying and we will employ teaching and learning strategies to support all children to access the learning in a way which feels safe for them, including:

Using **Distancing Techniques** such as fiction, puppets, case studies, role-play, videos, which enable them to discuss issues without disclosing personal experience.

Establishing **Ground Rules** such as not naming others when discussing friendship/bullying experiences, the right to pass during Circle Time activities/drama activities if this feels uncomfortable, using safe language to enable all children to feel safer as they participate in learning in this subject area.

Children are encouraged to use worry boxes in classes or to talk to a trusted adult to record any worries they have regarding bullying.

## 4. Responding to Bullying



## 4.1 Receiving a Report of Bullying

The school encourages and equips the whole school community to report all incidents of bullying including children who have experienced being bullied and bystanders who have witnessed an incident.

Our curriculum includes helping children to recognise bullying behaviours and identifying their trusted adults in and out of school. Children are encouraged to report any concerns about bullying to a trusted adult straight away (children can use worry boxes if they prefer).

All staff are trained on the need to take reports of bullying seriously, including when to involve a Senior Leader/ Designated Safeguarding Lead. All staff will act promptly when responding to reports of bullying. Staff who are not equipped to respond directly, or who do not have a child facing role, will inform a colleague. The first priority is to reassure the child that they have done the right thing by reporting the incident and to have a conversation with the child/ren targeted by the bullying behaviour to establish their views and feelings.

Where parents/carers have concerns about bullying, either because their child has been the target of bullying, is exhibiting bullying behaviours or they have witnessed other children exhibiting bullying behaviours, they are asked to inform the Class Teacher in the first instance. The class teacher will keep parents/carers informed of how the issue is being dealt with and give updates on the well-being of the child. All concerns will be logged on the school's CPOMs recording system, where senior leaders will be notified, who will monitor and oversee actions and outcomes and take further action where necessary.

## 4.2 Identifying Bullying

Staff are also trained to look out for signs/indicators that a child may be experiencing bullying, such as an unexplained change in a child's behaviour or demeanour, and such concerns will always be followed up with a conversation with the child in which the child is given the opportunity to share any worries, or name another staff member they would like to talk with.

We are aware that bullying behaviour is often made up of a series of incidents. See our Behaviour Management Policy for details of how we recognise, record and address examples of unkind behaviour. We use our definition of bullying to assess situations as they arise and judge whether or not bullying has occurred. We will also review behaviour records regularly to assess whether a pattern of potential bullying behaviour may be developing.

## 4.3 Recording Bullying Incidents

When an incident of bullying (including cyberbullying) is reported the school will endeavour to make a written record of this incident within 24 hours of the incident occurring. Bullying incidents are recorded on our electronic recording system CPOMs using our CPOMS protocols.

CPOMS entries are reviewed fortnightly during D/DSL meetings to ensure patterns of behaviour are identified and suitable interventions are put in place where needed.

As an additional level of monitoring, the trust regularly views our CPOMS records to identify any patterns in behaviour and hold the school to account on this.

## 4.5 Supporting Those Affected by Bullying Behaviours

The priority for staff in supporting a child who has been targeted by bullying is to ensure that they feel safe. We seek to be led by the child's wishes and to be flexible in our approach to enable them to feel safe in and around school. This sort of support may also be offered to bystanders who have witnessed bullying behaviour. There are a range of strategies that may be deployed to support a child affected by bullying behaviours, including:

- Providing a named adult in school with whom the child feels comfortable talking to about the situation to monitor the situation and check in regularly with the child.
- Providing supportive and nurturing structures such as a 'Circle of Friends'.

- Providing access to alternative options for some playtime/lunchtimes
- Participating in whole class PSHE/Circle Time sessions
- Accessing social skills groups to develop emotional resilience and learn skills in assertiveness.
- Accessing support from external agencies and professionals including counselling services. educational psychologists, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Specialist Teaching Services.
- Children are encouraged to use worry boxes in classes or to talk to a trusted adult to record any worries they have regarding bullying.

As a school we have a duty of care towards all children and we recognise that children who display bullying behaviours may have significant unmet needs of their own. We seek to support children who have displayed bullying behaviours to develop their empathy skills and make more positive behaviour choices in future. This support might include:

- Restorative work to help the child recognise the harm they have caused, learn from it and repair the harm.
- Attendance at social skills groups to develop skills of listening, negotiating and empathising with others and techniques for managing conflict and peaceful problem solving
- Providing structured positive playtime/lunchtimes such as access to Midday Supervisor/Play leader run activities
- Participating in whole class PSHE/Circle Time sessions
- Accessing support from external agencies and professionals including counselling services. educational psychologists, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Specialist Teaching Services.
- A risk assessment for the child will be put in place

In certain cases of bullying, the school will consider the use of disciplinary sanctions *e.g. in serious cases of bullying such as where violence has been used or where a restorative approach has been unsuccessful in preventing further incidents of bullying*. Sanctions will be applied fairly and proportionately in accordance with the school's Policy. Disciplinary sanctions are intended to:

- Impress on the perpetrator that what he/she has done is unacceptable
- Deter him/her from repeating that behaviour
- Signal to other children that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

The school will draw upon the school's Behaviour Management Policy and follow the system for sanctions, which includes:

- Children spending time at break/lunchtime with a member of staff reflecting on their behaviour and the impact it has on others
- Future playtimes may be missed
- Parents will be advised and asked to come into school to discuss concerns
- Children who demonstrate bullying behaviour will be supported in understanding the consequences of their actions and how to make the right choices/change their behaviour
- Additional sanctions as considered suitable may also be given depending upon the age range of the child
- Children may be sent to straight to the head teacher for severe inappropriate behaviours, in line with our behaviour policy

In the case of more serious and persistent bullying, where the perpetrator has not responded to the school's restorative strategies (see above) or sanctions, the school may consider excluding the perpetrator from the school. Some children who have been subjected to bullying can be provoked into violent behaviour. Where an attack has been provoked after months of persistent bullying, the school will view this behaviour differently from an unprovoked attack and will ensure that sanctions are proportionate to the circumstances.

## 4.6 Working with Parents and Carers

Where the school has become aware of a bullying situation, the parents/carers of *the child who is being bullied will be informed via a phone call and parents/carers will be invited to the school to discuss their child's situation*. The school will endeavour to involve parents/carers of children who have been bullied constructively at an early stage to support the process of working together to find ways of resolving the situation and bringing about reconciliation. The outcome of the meeting and agreed actions/responses will be recorded on the school's CPOMS.

The parents/carers of the child displaying bullying behaviours will also be invited to the school to discuss the situation. The school seeks to work in partnership with parents/carers to help children to learn about the consequences of their behaviour



choices and to support them to adopt positive behaviour choices in future. The outcome of the meeting and agreed actions/responses will be recorded on the school's CPOMS

The school ensures that staff and all parents/carers remain fully aware of the measures that have been put into place to prevent the occurrence of further incidents. Follow up appointments are made with parent/carers to share these agreed measures and to monitor their success in preventing further bullying.

#### **4.7 Out of School Bullying/Cyberbullying**

The school recognises that bullying can and does happen outside school and in the community. Bullying is a societal issue and its occurrence reflects the ways in which children socialise in school and in the wider community. The school believes that bullying is unacceptable wherever and whenever it happens. The school has specific powers to intervene in cases of cyberbullying and bullying on the way to and from school.

The school encourages children to seek help (via trusted adults, worry boxes) and to tell us about incidents of bullying that happen outside the school so that the school can:

- Raise awareness among the whole school community of possible risks within the community
- Alert colleagues in other schools whose pupils are bullying off the school premises
- Contact local police officers and representatives from the Youth Service, Locality Teams and other organisations (including sports clubs and voluntary organisations)
- Map safer routes to school in the event of a child being bullied on their journey to school
- Offer children and parents/carers strategies to manage bullying off the school premises e.g. guidance on how to keep safe online.

### **5. Monitoring Review and Evaluation**

Monitoring, review and evaluation of the Policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher/PSHE lead. The policy will be comprehensively reviewed with engagement from members of the school community each year.

**Appendix 1**

**School Risk Assessment for Child – on - child**

**Name of Child:**            **Year group:**            **Class:**            **Class teacher:**

CONSIDERATIONS	RISK (CONSIDER VICTIM, CHILD ALLEGED TO HAVE CAUSED HARM, OTHER PUPILS AND STAFF)	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)	ACTIONS TO REDUCE RISK
What is the incident? Who was involved? Where did it happen?			
Does this incident constitute a crime? Assault, sexual assault, rape, sharing of indecent images of children, etc etc. As such has this been referred to the police?			
Is it necessary to limit contact between the children involved? Refer to KCSiE and DFE guidance on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools and colleges			
Is there an actual or perceived threat from the child alleged to have caused harm to the victim and/or others?			
Do they share classes?			
Do they share break times? Do they share peer/friendship groups?			
Do they share transport to/from school?			
Are they likely to come into contact with each other (or anyone else involved in/with knowledge of the incident) outside of school?			
How can such contact be limited?			
Is there a risk of harm from social media and gossip?			

**Further action taken by the school: Please complete for each child involved.**

<b>Action:</b>	<b>YES/NO/ NA</b>	<b>BY WHO</b>	<b>Date</b>
Parents informed			
Police informed			
Referral re MARF/ First response			
Referral to external support services			
Referral to internal support services			
Referral to CAMHS			
Referral to early help			
Other			

<b>Action:</b>	<b>YES/NO/ NA</b>	<b>BY WHO</b>	<b>Date</b>
Parents informed			
Police informed			
Referral re MARF/ First response			
Referral to external support services			
Referral to internal support services			
Referral to CAMHS			
Referral to early help			
Other			

## **Appendix 2**

### **Other related policies**

Child Protection

ICT Acceptable Use

Behaviour

Exclusions

Online Safety

Relationships Education

SEND

Teaching and Learning