# Anti-Bullying Policy

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| Reviewed By: | L Bailey, Head of School |
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| Approved By: | Local Governing Body |
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## Introduction

At Shirley Manor Primary Academy we aim to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment which allows all our children to learn in an atmosphere which is focused on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential. We expect our children to act safely, and feel safe, in and outside of school – we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we are committed to preventing and tackling it. We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our children to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours. If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our children, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school.

Shirley Manor Primary Academy we encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance (1st September 2024).

All staff at our school are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

## How The Ethos Of Our School Helps To Support Our Anti Bullying Policy

♦   Our aim is to ensure children experience a safe and positive environment, free from bullying and harm.
♦   We constantly encourage children to treat each other with respect.
♦   We encourage children to form positive attitudes toward friendships and to respect diversity.
♦   We use any available opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying through our PSHE programme and behaviour policy

Our Behaviour Policy includes rewards and sanctions which are used consistently, alongside positive relationships, to prevent inappropriate behaviour, and promote positive behaviour.

## What Is Bullying?

At Shirley Manor Primary Academy we have adopted the definition of bullying provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance:
**"Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online."**

**Bullying can be, but not limited to:**
● **Emotional:** Derogatory name calling of an insulting and/or personal nature. Demanding money, material goods or favours by means of threat or force.

● **Physical:** Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence because of some perceived physical, economic, sexual, intellectual, cultural or racial difference.

● **Racist:** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

● **Sexual:** Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

● **Homophobic:** because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality. Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying is unacceptable

● **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, abuse and threats. Ridiculing an individual.

● **Cyber:** All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

## Behaviour often associated with bullying

**Baiting**
Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonize those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretively to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get in to trouble.

**Banter**
The dictionary describes banter as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'.
Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.
Types of Banter:
● Friendly Banter- There's no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits
● Ignorant Banter- crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry.
● Malicious Banter- Done to humiliate a person-often in public

Banter can occur both online and offline and includes a range of behaviours that may be verbal, physical, or information/message sharing (online).

**Relational Conflicts**
However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between children, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out.

Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict incident, children show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), children who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'.

Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the children to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying.

Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all children feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

## Why are children and young people bullied?

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.
 *Specific types of bullying include, but are not limited to:*

**Prejudice Related Bullying**
Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:
● age
● being or becoming a transsexual person
● disability
● race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy, Roma, Travellers
● religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
● sex / gender
● sexual orientation
These are called 'protected characteristics'.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident.

**Other vulnerable groups include:**
● bullying related to appearance or health
● bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious.

**Prejudice Related Language**
Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transsexual, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

## Where does bullying take place?

At Shirley Manor Primary Academy, we understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community. Bullying may also take place online (this is sometimes referred to as cyberbullying).

We will offer support and guidance to children, parents/carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying whether this has taken place inside school, outside of school or online. We are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

**Cyberbullying**
The ever-increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims.

Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school.

Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other forms of bullying.

Cyberbullying can include:
- hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice / hate messages
- Impersonating someone on line
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our online safety policy) and encourage good online behaviour.

## Strategies for Preventing Bullying

At Shirley Manor Primary Academy, we are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community.

The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- Active School Council with representatives from each year groups
- Ensuring that the school actively promotes the celebration of difference and diversity
- Robust R(S)HE curriculum for all year groups using SCARF resources
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually (November)
- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying
- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions – through surveys etc.
- Specific initiatives for identified individuals or groups
- Family Mentor who works with identified children on a 1:1 or small group basis

- Regular staff training and development for all staff (including lunchtime play team)
- Visits from external agencies (e.g. NSPCC, KCU, D-Side etc)
- All staff model expected behaviour
- Information sent home to parents

## Bullying is a whole school issue

By involving Governors, teachers, teaching assistants, parents, and children, people become aware of the school policy on bullying and that we are serious about tackling the problem.

We want children, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community. We have clear reporting systems for each group of our school community, the effectiveness of these reporting systems is reviewed throughout the academic year and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community. We ensure that all visitors to our school are aware of our Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures and which staff member they should report any concerns to.

All incidents of bullying are dealt with directly by the Head of School. Every report of bullying is logged as bullying.

If the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the children involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

There are also posters and a display for children around school as a reminder of what they can do to let staff know their concerns. Childline, telephone helpline number is also displayed. Childline – 0800 1111 (open 24hrs)

It is important that children are and feel that they are listened to when discussing or disclosing any potential incidents of bullying and know that this is taken seriously.
- Listen to the child
- Take them seriously
- Show empathy
- Let the child know it's not their fault
- Avoid stereotypes
- Reassure them they were right to tell you

**Parents/Carers:**
We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying.

We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact the Head of School. Following the report and/or the meeting, the Head of School will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The Head of School/Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the school's safeguarding procedures if the report is deemed urgent or if a child is considered at risk.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the school with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in person or online.

Our school remains committed to supporting children and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the children involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations). This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

## **What parents/carers can do to help**

Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example they may look for excuses not to come to school or not produce work to their normal standard.

Show an interest in how their day has gone and who they have been playing with.

If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying, inform the Head of School immediately and your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken.

It is important that you advise your child not to retaliate. It can make matters worse.

Reassure your child by telling them that there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his/her fault that they are being bullied.

Make sure your child knows that the school has an anti-bullying policy and they must not be afraid to ask for help. If they are reluctant to approach a member of staff with this problem, ask them to write their problem out on note and post it to Mrs Cooper.

## **Links with other Policies**

The policies below all relate to issues surrounding bullying and should be referred to, when necessary, in relation to the Anti-Bullying policy.

| Policy | Why |
| --- | --- |
| Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy | Includes information about child protection procedures and contextualised safeguarding |
| Online Safety Policy | Includes information about children's online behaviour and details about online bullying/cyberbullying |
| Equality Policy | Includes information about our school's approach to tackling prejudice and celebrating differences. Links to prejudice-related language and crime and the protected characteristics |
| RSHE Policy | Includes information about our school's RSHE programme and how we teach about relationships, friendships, and bullying |
| Behaviour Policy | Includes information about our school's behaviour expectations |