

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Including Cyberbullying, Prejudice-Based and Discriminatory Bullying

Whole School including EYFS

Version	1	2	3	4	5
Policy reviewed on	September 2023	September 2024			
Policy written by	Mrs Boulton	Mrs Boulton			
Policy seen by governors	Board Meeting – 20/09/23	Board Meeting 9.10.24			
Date of next review	September 2024	September 2025			

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Bullying can be and includes for the purpose of this Policy:

- Emotional - Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- Physical Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, threatening or obscene gestures.
- Racial Using racial taunts, graffiti, gestures because of someone's skin colour and/or origin.
- Sexual/Sexist Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments because of gender.
- Verbal Insults, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing and name-calling including comments made against particular groups for example because of disability, Special Educational Needs or on grounds of religion, cultural background, gender, sexual orientation or transgender status.
- Cyber - All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse, social network sites, threats by text messaging and telephone calls, AI and misuse of photographic technology, e.g. cameras and videos. This includes sexting or threatening and/or blackmailing a person to share images of that person or purporting to be that person or connected with them in some way.
- Religious Unkind words or actions because of someone's religion.
- SEND Unkindness because of physical or mental disabilities or having Special Educational Needs.
- Homophobic - Treating someone unkindly because people think that they are or might be homosexual.
- Transphobic - Unkindness due to someone's gender identity, their perceived gender identity or because they do not conform to culturally conventional gender roles.
- Family related Unkindness because a child is adopted or is a carer, or the like.
- All forms of prejudicial bullying including all protected characteristics.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PRINCIPLES

1.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 states, 'all schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils'. This Act also gives head teachers the ability to ensure that pupils behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff.

1.2 Our Anti-Bullying Policy takes account of all the different forms of bullying that may occur between and with the children who attend Branwood Preparatory School. It covers all those incidents of which we become aware, that may occur whilst the children are on the premises at the school under our supervision or outside of it.

1.3 This policy should be seen in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and our Staff Code of Conduct Policy, copies of which are located on our website. This policy applies to all pupils in the school (including those in Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS)) and applies to actions undertaken both inside and outside of the school. The policy aims to outline a consistent school response to any bullying incident that may occur.

1.4 This Anti-Bullying Policy ensures that at Branwood Preparatory School, we foster a culture of safety throughout the school where children and young people are able to alert us to any incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying and be confident that they

will be dealt with effectively. This Anti Bullying Policy also enables us to prevent issues escalating to safeguarding concerns.

2.0 OUR GENERAL POLICY GOVERNING OUR CHILDREN AND BULLYING

2.1 Our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. It is imperative that all children at the school feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community achieve their maximum potential. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop their full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

2.1 The school prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at school, online and at home, and that the school and parents co-operate closely together. Acceptance of our **Behaviour Policy** forms part of our terms and conditions.

2.2 This **Anti-Bullying Policy** is available to parents/guardians of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and in hard copy on request. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils. We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our intolerance of bullying, cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of pupils or staff and our support of the latest DfE guidance provided within its document Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) as updated 2024. Bullying of any sort prevents children from achieving their potential and prevents equality of opportunity. Any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate will result in disciplinary action in accordance with our **Behaviour Policy**.

3.0 DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

3.1 Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

3.2 Bullying is therefore:

- Repetitive and persistent. bullying is usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern, and it can be extremely threatening and intimidating even when very subtle. Nevertheless, sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time;
- Intentionally harmful. The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present;
- Involves an imbalance of power. bullying leaves someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it. In some cases, an imbalance of power may mean that bullying crosses the threshold into abuse. This would require implementation of safeguarding procedures.

4.0 THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

4.1 Bullying, including cyberbullying, sexual harassment and sexual violence, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying incidents are recorded and reviewed, and the information is used to inform and enhance the whole school approach to all forms of anti-bullying strategies and responses within the school

4.2 Our school fosters a culture of safety through the development of an Anti-Bullying Policy where children and young people feel confident to report any incidents of bullying including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, sexual harassment, or inappropriate sexualised behaviour, homophobic, biphobic and transgender bullying

4.3 We always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's social and moral principles, and potentially with the school's **Equal Opportunities Policy**, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The school will never dismiss or downplay bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy. Staff will reassure any victim(s) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

4.4 The school understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional, and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the school's first priority, however, the school acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the Behaviour Policy. Whilst bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, sexting, the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes (in certain circumstances), upskirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

4.5 The school recognises that children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child on child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The school also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. All pupils have a right to have their protected characteristics respected.

4.6 Pupils who are victims of bullying will always be supported and will be reassured that they will be kept safe. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving and offered support for their own circumstances, where appropriate.

4.7 Bullying which occurs on school trips, online, or outside of the school's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on school premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for misbehaviour online, outside school premises and outside school hours.

5.0 SIGNS OF BULLYING

5.1 In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identity of bullies at the school we require all staff to:

- Watch and check for early signs of distress in pupils
- To act as a deterrent by being clearly visible at playtimes
- Monitor children's behaviour in the playground

- To ensure children are never left unattended except when at the toilet
- To ensure appropriate behaviour is normal practice, particularly in the play spaces

A child may indicate by their behaviour that they are being bullied. Staff will look out for some or all of the following signs, which may be evidence of bullying:

- Unwillingness to return to school;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with, or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money, and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self-confidence;
- Frequent visits to the school office with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school

5.2 Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or sufficient combination of these possible signs of bullying would be investigated by parents/guardians and teachers and reported/ recorded as appropriate (see below).

6.0 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Within the school, we have the following areas of focus and concern in safeguarding our children, which we update to latest statutory guidance, specifically the DfE document "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSIE) updated 2024:

1. Preventative Measures
2. Induction and Training for all staff engaged in regulated activities, ensuring the latest available guidance is imparted on the best practice for understanding and dealing with bullying
3. Strategies for identifying and monitoring bullying by those responsible for children
4. Reporting and referrals where appropriate within the school and externally to the Local Authority or police of serious incidents of which we become aware.
5. Special consideration of EYFS issues.
6. The role of parents/guardians in assisting anti-bullying measures

7.0 PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

7.1 We take the following preventative measures to ensure that bullying does not become a problem at our school:

PUPILS

- All new pupils are told about the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported. We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions but sometimes we may remove a reward due to hurtful behaviour.
- Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Head Teacher, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action, but such instances are rare. Parents/guardians are always informed via a note in the homework diary, a conversation with the deputy head encouraging children to think about what happened, the consequences and what they must do to prevent it happening again or by telephone when any sanction or reproof is needed. In cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, parents/guardians will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's teacher to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.
- Assemblies and class discussions address these issues ((including cyberbullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) at regular intervals.
- Our PSHEE and RSE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Other lessons, particularly Religious Education (RE), English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they believe that bullying is taking place, They are reassured that they will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe.
- The school buildings have posters giving advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines where they can connect with external specialists, such as ChildLine.
- Pupils are supervised in all areas outside the classroom and staff patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.

STAFF

- Training in child protection and anti-bullying is an important part of the induction process. Every new member of our teaching staff, including part-timers, temporary, visiting and contract staff working in school, receive appropriate training on these responsibilities. This requires them to be alert to the signs of abuse, bullying (including cyberbullying) and radicalisation and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns internally and where appropriate externally.
- All school staff understand the principles of the school policy, their legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent problems and sources of further support.

- The school recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND and/or certain health conditions. The school will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils.
- All reports of alleged incidents are recorded and investigated at once. A report of a bullying incident is logged in pastoral section of the Engage system once there is direct evidence (e.g. by adult witnesses on duty in the playground) or indirect evidence from the victim or victims' parents. These records are reviewed for patterns of behaviour by the Head teacher.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips, online, or that otherwise occur outside of school involving our pupils. Disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the schools **Behaviour Policy** and will be applied in a fair and consistent and reasonable manner, taking into account the needs of pupils with SEND and certain health conditions and vulnerable pupils.
- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator(s). If staff reasonably suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and discuss concerns with the DSL without delay.

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

- We encourage close contact between the Head Teacher and parents/ guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried their child might be being bullied, or we suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying.
- If parents/ guardians have any concerns about bullying, they should contact their child's class teacher immediately. It is essential that they provide all the details of which they are aware as early as possible.
- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to support the school's **Anti -Bullying Policy** and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.
- We welcome feedback from parents/guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and results of this Anti-bullying policy.
- In the event that parents/guardians feel that a situation has not been resolved satisfactorily, they should refer to the school's **Complaints Policy**, a copy of which can be found on the website.

8.0 PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

8.1 All pupils know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried. Our Deputy Head Teacher is our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Assistant Head Teacher is our Deputy DSL (DDSL). Our procedures require that the DSL or the Deputy DSL, be informed should a member of staff, a parent or any other adult ever have any concerns of their own, or if they are ever approached by a child. In the EYFS, the DSL should be informed in the first instance.

8.2 For all teaching staff approached, the emphasis is always on a caring, listening, unprejudiced approach as bullies may be seen or unseen at work; bullies are often unseen victims too - that is often why they bully; bullying activities may be undertaken by children against each other; and so

communication is the key to addressing bullying. The class teacher (or the DSL or DDSLs in their absence) will therefore:

- Enter the allegation of bullying on CPOMS using either direct evidence of the incident (e.g. by adult witnesses on duty in the playground) or indirect evidence from the victim or the victim's parents.
- Inform the Deputy Head Teacher (who is also the DSL) - or the DDSL in the absence of the Deputy Head Teacher
- The DSL will notify the Governing Body if the parent has made the allegation, and a note will be made in the Child-on-Child Log.
- Undertake discussions at length with the alleged victim in a private location to ascertain their version of the events. This will require patience and understanding.
- Obtain reports from witnesses if possible.
- Undertake discussions with the alleged bully/bullies, who will be asked to give their version of events:
 - If they own up, then staff follow the procedure outlined below
 - If they do not own up, staff will investigate further. Not all instances of claimed bullying behaviour are clear and proven and not all incidents are one-sided.
- Details of the investigation carried out are entered in the Child-on-child Log.
- A conclusion is drawn by the teacher, DSL and/or Head Teacher and this together with what action is to be taken is also entered into the Child-on-child Log.
- If there is insufficient evidence to indicate bullying, there may be no action taken within the school. This will be noted on the record.
- Where the original allegation of bullying was made by a parent, a report will be sent to parents in writing from the Head Teacher, detailing:-
 - o The allegation made
 - o A definition of bullying according to the DfE.
 - o The investigation work done.
 - o The findings made, and the conclusions drawn as to whether bullying occurred as per the definition.
 - o Actions to be taken, if any.
- If there is clear evidence of bullying, the bully is helped to recognise their unsociable behaviour and offered support to modify that behaviour.
- Where a child is deliberately aggressive, for example, in the playground, they should be removed from the situation so that others can enjoy their break and gradually re-introduced to the playground, with progress monitored carefully.

- Introduce sanctions for the child who is bullying, which may include, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s) obtaining an apology, withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, suspension or, with persistent or serious incidents, exclusion from school.
- If deemed necessary and with the approval of the Head Teacher or a senior member of staff, a class teacher may have separate discussions with parents/guardians of bully and victim.
- Inform the parents/guardians that an incident has occurred and the action that has taken place and ask that they support the strategies proposed to tackle the problem.
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition occurs.
- Assuming the behaviour of the child who is bullying improves, favoured activities etc. can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.
- Review and analyse the incident to identify lessons learnt.

9.0 CYBERBULLYING

9.1 Cyberbullying can be defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others" (Belsey, <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>).

9.2 It is an aggressive, intentional act often carried out repeatedly over time, and often against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves. As a primary school, the School policy on mobile technology is that pupils are not allowed devices in school. Occasionally, a Year 6 pupil who is coming to and from school alone will have a device, but this has to be agreed by the school and the device is handed in to the class teacher for safe keeping during school hours. With that proviso, the school acknowledges that cyberbullying could take place inside school but is most likely to take place outside of school and at any time of the day.

9.3 Cyberbullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear, or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive, or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

9.4 The school acknowledges that cyberbullying may take many different forms including: cyberstalking, exclusion or peer rejection, and impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogative comments on online platforms, sharing nudes/semi nudes, upskirting and sexting. The school has a role to play in teaching pupils about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and

confidently regardless of the device, platform, or app. In taking this forward, the school has regard to the DfE's non-statutory guidance on Teaching online safety in school (June 2019).

10.0 CYBER-BULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

10.1 In addition to the preventative measures described above, the school:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its procedures for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our approved and tested filtering system and our IT contractors supply reports monitoring pupils' use.
- Will impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Issues pupils with their own personal school email address.
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons and on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details private and safe.
- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones in school. If a parent wishes their child to have a mobile phone after school hours, this should be indicated in advance via email and the mobile phone handed to a member of staff for safekeeping during the school day.

11.0 Procedures for dealing with cyberbullying

The school will follow the procedures set out in this policy and in the **Safeguarding Policy** where relevant for incidents of cyberbullying, taking such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating pupil conduct and protecting the reputation of the school, and the welfare of its pupils.

Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are however criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, upskirting, sharing nudes/semi-nudes, and sexting. Where the school considers that a reported incident of cyberbullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police.

12.0 EYFS CHILDREN

Even the youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They have to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect other's possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions at reception level (KG2) but sometimes we may remove privileges for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Head Teacher, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed via e mail by the class teacher or a phone call when any sanction or reproof is needed. In the cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, the parents will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's teacher and/or Deputy Head to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty. A serious incident would be escalated to the Head Teacher.

13.0 COMPLAINTS

Parents/guardians are encouraged to use our complaint procedure as set out in the school's **Complaints Policy** (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYFS children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled. The Complaints Policy explains how to complain to Ofsted.

14.0 RELATED POLICIES

Please refer to the following policies and which should be read in conjunction with each other:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- School Trips Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy