



**Acklam Whin Primary School**

**Anti-bullying Policy**

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**Agreed by Governors:**

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## Statement of intent

Acklam Whin believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Behavioural Policy.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behavioural Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy

## 2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils.
- Pupils with SEND.

### 3. Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

### 4. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- Appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Reviewing bullying incidents logged on CPOMs.
- Analysing the data on CPOMs regularly to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

Key Stage leads are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.

### Anti-bullying

- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the pupil's the key stage lead of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing their child's teacher if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

## 5. Statutory implications

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment ,victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

## 6. Prevention

## Anti-bullying

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a clear set of values which will be regularly promoted across the whole school in regular assemblies and PSHE lessons.

All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the relationships and health education curriculum.

Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

The school will be alert to, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

## 7. Signs of bullying

Staff will be alert to signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying.

Although some signs may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
- They have been the victim of abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's key stage lead, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

## 8. Staff principles

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident.

Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless the pupil has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

## 9. Child-on-child abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of Child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. See Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

## 10. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling.

## Anti-bullying

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer
- Being on their phone routinely
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response.

During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of pupils staying safe online, and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

## 11. Procedures

Minor incidents will be reported to the victim's teacher, who will investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator, inform the key stage lead and record the incident on CPOMs.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to a first aid trained member of staff for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- The headteacher will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

## 12. Sanctions

### Anti-bullying

If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. A member of the senior leadership team will inform the perpetrator of the type of sanction to be used in this instance.

If possible, there will be an attempt of reconciliation and an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

The school will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The school's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.

The key stage lead will informally monitor the pupils involved.

The school will remain cognisant of the fact that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour, and will not exclude pupils unless as a last resort – where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying.

## **13. Support**

In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from a member of staff
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken
- Liaison with their parents
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online
- Discussion with their parent on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents)

The headteacher will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g. preventing them sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary. Victims will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups.

The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

## **14. Follow-up support**

The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by their key teachers. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

Pupils who have bullied others will also be supported.

## **15. Bullying outside of school**

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Child-on-child Abuse Policy.



## Anti-bullying

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

## 16. Record keeping

The DSL will ensure that records are kept on CPOMS with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The headteacher and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- Responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled.