



**THE ABBEY CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Together we learn, we care, we achieve –  
for ourselves, for each other, and for the community in which we live.

# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**Review date: November 2023**

**Next review date: November 2025**

# INTRODUCTION

This policy forms an integral part of the school policy on behaviour. Our approach to bullying is through i) ongoing personal, social and moral education and ii) through positive measures to deal with incidents.

## RATIONALE

Everyone at the Abbey School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening, and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists, the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to develop pupils' understanding about what constitutes bullying behaviour, to provide support for bullied pupils and to maintain an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

## DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

### What is bullying?

Bullying can happen to anyone. Most definitions consider bullying to be:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves

### Bullying may include:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, hair pulling, taking belongings, damage to property, deliberately disrupting work or play
- Verbal - name calling, insulting, saying nasty things, hurtful teasing, put downs, threats
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories, leaving someone out, not letting someone participate

### Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Abbey School works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out". Pupils need to understand that taunting a child who has reported bullying to a member of staff also constitutes bullying. In all schools there will be incidents of bullying. During their school life many children will at some point be a victim, a perpetrator or a witness to such behaviour.

## **Racism**

'Racism is defined as 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

Taken from the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry The Macpherson Report 1999

### **Bullying can take many forms but the main types are;**

- **bullying because you are different**
- bullying because of a **special educational need or disability (SEND)**
- **racist bullying** because of your skin colour
- **religious bullying** because of your beliefs or faith
- **sizeist bullying** referring to your body size
- **sexist bullying** focusing on you being of the opposite sex
- **homophobic bullying** based on your sexual orientation
- **cyberbullying** targeting you online, often anonymously

### **People are less likely to bully if:**

- They have secure relationships
- They feel good about themselves
- They have empathy for others
- They are emotionally literate

## **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Abbey School also has a duty to recognize the early sign of Peer-on-peer abuse (as detailed in our Child Protection Policy). Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways and different gender issues can be prevalent. Severe harm may be caused to children by abusive and bullying behaviour (detailed above) of other children, which may be physical, sexual or emotional and can include gender-based violence, sexual assaults, sexting, peer-on-peer exploitation, sexual bullying or harmful sexual behavior. Therefore, Abbey School is commitment to dealing with bullying with "zero tolerance" enables the school to minimize risk associated with peer-on-peer abuse.

## **What the law says:**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

There are a number of statutory obligations on schools with regard to behaviour which establish clear responsibilities to respond to bullying.

In particular section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:

provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents; 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.

## **The Equality Act 2014**

Our policy reflects the provisions of the Equality Act 2014.

We are concerned to minimise disadvantages suffered by adults or children who share a relevant protected characteristic (see Equality Statement).

### **Our aims**

- To make it clear to all members of the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- To establish an atmosphere of respect in the school which reduces prejudice, raises self-esteem and ensures that all pupils achieve the level of attainment and respect that they deserve.
- For everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as a victim or observer.
- To ensure that all reported incidents are followed up.
- To establish facts clearly, taking separate accounts from victims, bullies and witnesses.
- To offer comfort and support to victims
- To confront bullies with the seriousness of the offence and to offer support to help them readjust their behaviour.
- To seek parental/carers and peer group support and co-operation at all times.
- To keep an incident log to record and monitor all incidents of bullying.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour.

Through the PSHE curriculum, pupils are taught how to live within a community as caring and responsible citizens. Relationships, justice, equal rights and acceptable behaviour will be discussed. In addition, pupils are made aware of words and actions which constitute unkind behaviour or bullying regularly through assemblies, Circle Time, classroom discussions and through an immediate response to any incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Role play and drama techniques may also be employed to develop pupils' awareness of bullying situations.

## **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING**

This policy forms an integral part of the school policy on behaviour. Our approach to bullying is through i) ongoing personal, social and moral education and ii) through positive measures to deal with incidents.

All members of staff are vigilant for signs of bullying, and all reported incidents of bullying will be investigated quickly and taken seriously, with an initial response to concerned parent within two working days where possible, but time must be allowed for investigation of the facts and formal reporting.

Pupils are encouraged to report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school. Similarly, when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see

bullying taking place, they are encouraged to report their knowledge to a member of staff.

A record is kept of incidents judged to be of a bullying nature. Behaviour records are kept for individual children as appropriate which would include a description of any bullying incidents. A log of incidents of bullying will be kept by the class teacher in the behaviour file for each cohort, which will include a record of action taken. This information can be shared with other members of staff who work with the children concerned. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences, and to facilitate co-ordinated action, all repeated incidences of bullying will be reported to the Headteacher.

Incidents of bullying, deemed appropriate by the Headteacher, will be logged and the class teacher will be informed. The Headteacher will update her records with information from teachers' logs as appropriate. Records will be retained for the whole period of the child's attendance at the school, and for one year after a child has left the school

If bullying includes racist abuse then it should additionally be reported to the Deputy Headteacher to be recorded in the Racial Incident log.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

Children who have been bullying other children will be reprimanded and sanctions will be applied, depending on the circumstances.

Children who have been bullied will be supported by members of staff in the following ways:

- through reassurance that the problem has been dealt with by adults,
- that staff are watching the situation to ensure that the bullying has stopped,
- through knowing that the child who has bullied has been punished,
- by giving opportunities to the child who has been bullied to talk about how they feel if they need to.

Regular contact will be made with the child who has been reprimanded for bullying so that he/she knows that his/her behaviour is being monitored. Monitoring will be carried out either by the class teacher or headteacher depending on the nature of the offence, so that the child is completely clear that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated in this school. Every effort will be made to investigate the underlying causes of bullying behaviour, and support will be given as appropriate.

Class teachers with any concerns about a child's tendencies towards rough or unkind behaviour will discuss this with parents on the consultations evenings, if there has not been a need to contact parents at an earlier stage.

Good behaviour, including acts of kindness, thoughtfulness and consideration for others is regularly rewarded with praise, stickers, house points and achievement certificates. Positive behaviour characteristics are praised publicly in assemblies.

### **Bullying and Racism Outside School Premises**

Headteachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying or racist incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as outside the local shops or town centre.

Where bullying or racism outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher and senior staff will use discretion when considering appropriate actions.

### **Cyber Bullying**

We are aware that as mobile, internet and wireless technologies have increased the pace of communication, there are more opportunities for misuse through cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen 24/7, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content.

It is crucial that children use these technologies safely and positively and are aware of the consequences of misuse. Cyber bullying has been identified as text-message bullying, picture/video-clip bullying, phone call bullying, e-mail bullying, instant messaging bullying and bullying via websites.

Cyber bullying adds new dimensions to the problem of bullying in that it can reach the victims in their private spaces and outside school hours. Cyber bullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience, with speed and often remain unidentified. Children and parents must follow the guidelines set out in our Home School Agreement for all children and our Mobile Phone Policy for children in Years 5 and 6.

### **Staff will apply the following consistently.**

- Victims will be treated sensitively and taken seriously.
- Staff will speak with individuals in the first instance in an attempt to find out what happened, allowing each to express their views and feelings.
- The person responding to the incident must report it to the class teacher, (if not the class teacher), who will either deal with and record the incident, or will refer the matter on.
- Depending on the nature of the incident, the matter may be referred to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or other senior member of staff.
- The Headteacher must be made aware of all significant incidents of bullying and all racist incidents.

- Children must be encouraged to tell an adult if they witness a bullying incident, or if they are the victim of such an incident.
- Parents of all pupils involved in a witnessed or evidenced case of bullying and racist incident will be informed.
- Parents with concerns should contact the school rather than approaching individual children or families themselves.
- We always seek to recognise why a child is displaying inappropriate behaviour and take steps to support them in order to rectify this.
- Children must feel confident that reports of bullying and racism will be taken seriously and followed up promptly by staff. They should also be reassured by staff that they were right to report the incident.
- A failure to respond could be seen to condone the behaviour.
- All incidents of racist or significant bullying behaviour are collected and recorded, giving details of both perpetrators and victims. Records are kept in the Headteacher's office.
- Those affected by bullying or racism may require longer term support depending on the nature of the incident.

As a result of bullying or racist incidents, the school will apply sanctions, as appropriate, as listed in our Behaviour Policy.

There is no one way to successfully address every incident. It is vital, however, that there is consistency in the school's approach.

All racist incidents and significant bullying incidents are recorded in school. These are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis. Incidents are not reported to the police unless there is clear criminal conduct.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

In the event of a proven serious bullying incident, or persistent bullying, the parents of bullies and their victims will be informed about the incident and the action that has been taken. Parents will be asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The child who is bullying will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. The sanctions will be determined by the headteacher according to the severity of the incident.

Whilst there is little history of bullying at the Abbey School, we believe that one case is one case too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary we have and will call on outside resources such as the LA Behaviour Support Service for additional support.