

Mulbarton Primary School



Anti-bullying Policy: Pupils

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Statement of intent

Mulbarton Primary School 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, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

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.

Signed by:

Beverly Theobald

Headteacher

Date:

May 2022

Kevin Holland

Chair of governors

Date:

May 2022

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation 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
- 1.2. This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:
 - 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'
- 1.3. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Behavioural Policy
 - Online safety Policy
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021

2. Definition

- 2.1. 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.
- 2.2. Bullying is generally characterised by:
 - **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
 - **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) 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.

- 2.3. 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.
- 2.4. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:
 - Pupils with SEND.
 - Pupils who are adopted.
 - Pupils suffering from a health problem.
 - Pupils with caring responsibilities.

3. Types of bullying

- 3.1. Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything.
- 3.2. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.
- 3.3. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:
 - Verbally
 - Physically
 - Emotionally
 - Online (Cyber)
- 3.4. **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- 3.5. **Homophobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- 3.6. **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- 3.7. **Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- 3.8. **Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
- 3.9. **Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.
- 3.10. **Relational bullying:** Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The governing board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- 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.

4.2. 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.
- Using CPOMS to record all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data on CPOMS at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.
- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents, when more serious bullying incidents occur.

4.3. 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.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the headteacher of such observations.
- Refraining from gender 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.

4.4. 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.

4.5. 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.
- Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

5. Statutory implications

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

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, 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.

5.2. The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

5.3. 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.

5.4. 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 crime.

6. Prevention

- 6.1. The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying through our school rules, one of which is to 'be kind'. The rules are regularly promoted across the whole school.
- 6.2. All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.
- 6.3. Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work.
- 6.4. All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum.
- 6.5. Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- 6.6. Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- 6.7. Potential victims of bullying are placed in working groups with other pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.
- 6.8. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- 6.9. All members of the school are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- 6.10. All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- 6.11. A safe place, supervised by a teacher, is available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone.
- 6.12. The teacher supervising the area will speak to pupils to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.
- 6.13. Pupils deemed vulnerable, as defined in [section two](#), will meet with their class teacher regularly to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.
- 6.14. Class teachers will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- 6.15. Before a vulnerable pupil joins the school, the pupil's teacher and the DSLs will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening – this will include giving the pupil a group of friends, who are positive role models, to help integrate them into the school.
- 6.16. The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.
- 6.17. The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

7. Signs of bullying

- 7.1. Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:
- Being frightened to travel to or from school
 - Asking to be driven to school
 - Unwillingness to attend school
 - Truancy
 - Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
 - Saying that they feel ill in the morning
 - Decreased involvement in school work
 - Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
 - Missing possessions
 - Asking for extra money or stealing
 - Cuts or bruises
 - Lack of appetite
 - Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
 - Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
 - Lack of eye contact
 - Becoming short tempered
 - Change in behaviour and attitude at home
- 7.2. Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.
- 7.3. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.
- 7.4. In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:
- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the pupil becoming aggravated
 - They have been the victim of domestic abuse
 - Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed
- 7.5. If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's teacher, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

8. Staff principles

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

- 8.2. Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- 8.3. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- 8.4. Staff act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- 8.5. Staff always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern.
- 8.6. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform one of the DSLs immediately.
- 8.7. Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9. Cyber bullying

- 9.1. The school has an Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement in place, which outlines the school's zero-tolerance approach to cyber bullying.
- 9.2. The school views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in section 11 of this policy if they become aware of any incidents.
- 9.3. The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with section 12 and section 13 of this policy.
- 9.4. 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.
- 9.5. If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
- 9.6. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the headteacher will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.

10. Procedures

- 10.1. Minor incidents are reported to the victim's teacher, who investigates the incident, sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and reports the incident using CPOMs to alert the headteacher and any other relevant members of staff.

- 10.2. When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:
- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
 - Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication
 - If a pupil is injured, staff will follow usual first aid procedures in line with the First Aid policy.
 - A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
 - A witness is used for serious incidents
 - If appropriate, the alleged bully, 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
 - 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 attaching blame until the investigation is complete
 - All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils
- 10.3. Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic, sexual, etc 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.

11. Sanctions

- 11.1. If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- 11.2. The headteacher informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (eg missed playtimes) and future sanctions if the bullying continues.
- 11.3. If possible, the headteacher will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. 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 is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.
- 11.4. The perpetrator is made to realise, by speaking with their teacher or a member of the SLT, that some pupils do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour.
- 11.5. Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- 11.6. The class teacher informally monitors the pupils involved over the next half-term.

12. Support

- 12.1. For a month after the initial complaint of bullying, the class teacher holds an informal discussion, on a weekly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped.
- 12.2. The head teacher holds a formal meeting, on a monthly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped – these formal meetings will continue to take place once a month until the head teacher and victim are confident the bullying has stopped.
- 12.3. If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes.
- 12.4. The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- 12.5. The victim is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school club or activity.
- 12.6. The school, particularly the Nurture team and the school's Life Coach will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.
- 12.7. The school realises that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend an initial counselling session with the school's Life Coach to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.
- 12.8. The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

13. Follow-up support

- 13.1. The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored by their teacher
- 13.2. One-on-one sessions to discuss how the victim and bully are progressing may be appropriate.
- 13.3. If appropriate, follow-up correspondence is arranged with parents one month after the incident.
- 13.4. Pupils who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:
 - Being listened to
 - Having an immediate opportunity to meet with their teacher or a member of staff of their choice
 - Being reassured
 - Being offered continued support
 - Being offered counselling, where appropriate
- 13.5. Pupils who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:
 - Receiving a consequence for their actions
 - Being able to discuss what happened
 - Being helped to reflect on why they became involved

- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
 - Appropriate assistance from parents
- 13.6. In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the pupil cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the headteacher and DSLs will look to transfer the pupil to another mainstream school.
- 13.7. Where a child has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the pupil who has been the victim of bullying, their parents, the headteacher and DSLs will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

14. Bullying outside of school

- 14.1. 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.
- 14.2. Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.
- 14.3. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on.
- 14.4. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.
- 14.5. The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police, or the anti-social behaviour coordinator, of the action taken against a pupil.
- 14.6. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.

15. Monitoring and review

- 15.1. This policy is reviewed every two years by the headteacher and the DSLs.

