ANTI BULLYING POLICY

This policy was agreed by governors.

Committee:	Date:	Next Review Date:
L&A /FGB	Autumn 2023	Autumn 2024
L&A/FGB	Autumn 2024	Autumn 2025
L&A/FGB	Spring 2026	Autumn 2026

Principles

Bullying is more than a negative behaviour. The principles in this policy aim to support all children to behave positively for their own benefit and for those around them.

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.

Types of bullying include: physical bullying; verbal bullying; emotional/psychological bullying; cyber-bullying; prejudice-based bullying (racist, sexist, homophobic, etc); sexual bullying and harassment.

Research suggests some children may be more vulnerable to bullying, due to perceived differences, like:

- Having special educational needs or disabilities
- Protected characteristics such as race, religion or sexual orientation
- Being adopted or looked after
- Suffering from a health problem
- Having caring responsibilities

All allegations of bullying will be investigated and recorded by a member of the safeguarding team and procedures are outlined below.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- create a whole school approach
- make it easy for pupils to report negative behaviour and bullying
- explain how children and parents are listened to and incidents acted on
- support pupils to report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying
- create an inclusive culture where pupils can openly discuss bullying

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy. Where incidents do not meet the definition of bullying but involve negative behaviour, they will be addressed through our Behaviour Policy procedures.

Practice

We know that bullying does occur. There are four key elements to identifying bullying and although they may not all be present; the incident should be reviewed against these:

- **hurtful**
- **intentional**
- **repeated**
- **there is a power imbalance**

Signs and Symptoms of bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- reluctant or refusing to come to school
- changes their usual routine
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens self-harm

- cries themselves to sleep at night
- has nightmares or starts bedwetting
- regularly feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes unreasonable when dealing with school issues
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy.

Prevention

We take a proactive approach to preventing bullying through:

- Teaching about respectful relationships, diversity, and equality through our PSHE and RSE curriculum
- Creating an inclusive school culture where differences are celebrated
- Regular staff training on identifying and responding to bullying
- Pupil voice groups and peer support systems
- Clear reporting systems that are well-promoted and easily accessible to all pupils

Procedures for dealing with bullying

It is recognised that incidents of bullying occur in all school communities. It is essential that all such incidents are taken seriously and dealt with in an appropriate manner. A pupil or parent may report an incident to any member of staff.

We adopt a no-blame approach with bullying and recognise that it is important that the children see that all incidents are dealt with fairly and consistently. Some incidents, which may initially be reported or perceived as bullying, do not meet the definition above. Where incidents do not meet the definition of bullying but involve negative behaviour, they will be addressed through our Behaviour Policy procedures.

Other incidents or patterns may emerge where a negative behaviour *has become* bullying.

- Any negative behaviour incident will be dealt with as soon as possible by the member of staff who has been approached.
- The staff member talks to the child first and listens to his/her account or explanation of the behaviour that is causing distress.
- Where possible, all children are asked to give their account of the incident. Once all of the children have had the chance to speak, they are encouraged to make suggestions as to how they can actively help to prevent future incidents.
- Consequences will be given in line with the behaviour policy.
- A written chronology of events will be kept (on CPOMS) and this will be updated until the situation has been resolved.
- Behaviour incidents are monitored by the safeguarding leads to look for patterns or repetition.

Bullying is recognised as a form of child-on-child abuse and is therefore a safeguarding issue which must be referred to a member of the safeguarding team. Where a bullying incident constitutes a child protection concern (where there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm) or could be a criminal offence, one of the safeguarding leads will be informed immediately and appropriate referrals made. Staff should not delay taking action if the safeguarding leads are not available.

Cyber-bullying includes bullying through social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms, and other online spaces. Staff should be aware of emerging risks including AI-generated content, deepfakes, and the spread of

misinformation or conspiracy theories that may be used to bully or harm pupils. Our approach to online bullying is detailed in our Online Safety Policy.

- It will be taken seriously and investigated by one of the safeguarding leads.
- The member of staff will speak to the pupils involved and proceed accordingly.
- Parents should be informed as soon as possible and this will be done by a safeguarding lead.
- A written copy of events will be kept on CPOMS and this will be updated until the situation has been resolved.
- There may be a range of responses appropriate to the situation and these will be discussed with the victim; relevant staff and parents or carers.
- School staff will not name other children involved or the consequences given to others.
- Fixed term Suspensions or Permanent Exclusions will follow the School Policy and Local Authority procedures, with a letter to the parents and a report to the Local Authority.
- In instances where bullying or cyber bullying has taken place outside of the school premises, pupils or parents may still report concerns to any member of staff. The processes outlined in this Policy will be followed in order to investigate the incident and to provide support to the victim and child responsible.
- The Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police (or to advise parents to do so), Children's First Contact Service (formerly MASH) or Local Authority Designated Office (LADO) of any incident.

We know that bullying is not always confined to pupils. A member of staff wishing to report an incident of bullying should approach the Head Teacher or, if the allegation is against the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors.

Support

Child Affected: Support for the child affected is essential, both immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review. Peer support, staff support, parental support and outside agency support may all be needed to ensure that the affected child does not suffer any long-term effects. Parents will be supported to maintain school attendance.

After an agreed period of time, staff will meet with the child affected to reassess the situation and the relationship between those involved.

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassurance
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Offering further or ongoing support through in-school strategies

Child responsible: It is recognised that support must be given to the child responsible. Disciplinary procedures against the child or children responsible are intended to change or modify behaviour rather than label anyone as a bully.

Such procedures may include:

- Individual behaviour/support plans drawn up between relevant parties e.g. SLT, teacher, SENDCo, support staff and shared with parents. These are regularly reviewed until the child can come off the behaviour/support plan.
- Withdrawal of activities as a result of their behaviour – subject to a Risk Assessment.

- Discussion or learning about the effects of bullying, including restorative meetings.
- Working with the family to provide any support necessary.
- Involvement of other agencies and services such as the Vulnerable Pupil Panel; Early Help or Behaviour Support Team.
- Fixed Term Suspension or Permanent exclusion as a last resort.

The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent pupils with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, our approach to behaviour that challenges may be differentiated to cater to the needs of the pupil.

Monitoring and Evaluation

CPOMS will be used in all allegations of bullying and for any pupil where the safeguarding leads identify a pattern of behaviour emerging. Records on CPOMS will include analysis of bullying incidents by type, including racist, sexist, disability-related, and homophobic/biphobic/transphobic bullying, and use of derogatory language. This analysis will be reviewed half-termly by the safeguarding leads to identify patterns and inform preventative strategies.

This policy will be monitored and evaluated through:

- Weekly SLT meetings
- Half-termly Safeguarding meetings to review CPOMS records and identify patterns
- Termly analysis of bullying data by type, including trends and effectiveness of interventions
- Annual review of the policy involving staff, pupils, parents and governors
- Regular pupil surveys and pupil voice groups to assess the school climate
- Governor oversight through the Learning & Attainment Committee and Full Governing Body
- Termly report to governors including the number and types of incidents, actions taken and the impact of the policy