



# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**September 2023**

**To read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour Policy**

Written by: G. Strong  
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## Rationale

Bullying and unkindness whether physical or emotional are entirely unacceptable at Joydens Wood Infant School. It conflicts sharply with the school's values and we will always treat it seriously.

The school's vision expresses a clear commitment to creating:

***A happy and safe place to learn and grow.***

**This is for all our children and staff.**

## Values

Our Values underpin our school's everyday practice from teaching and learning to every child's personal, social and emotional development.

- **Ready:** being on time to school, having excellent attendance and showing outstanding behaviour for learning
- **Respectful:** respecting others for who they are regardless of our differences, being kind and helpful towards others and listening to each other and adults
- **Responsible:** being good role models, taking ownership of our learning, looking after our school and demonstrating kindness by helping others to do the same
- **Resilient:** taking on challenges by putting in lots of effort, striving to improve and recognising our own and others' achievements, no matter how big or small

## Respect

An ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave is embedded into our school's everyday life. That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school.

Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

## Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

The school must:

- Have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils,
- All measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents
- Ensure bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying policy

## **What is bullying?**

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- Cyber Bullying (online)

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 instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities.

It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

## **Cyber-bullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, 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.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. Section 62 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 defines prohibited images of children. Section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Immigrations Act 2008 defines extreme pornographic images. Teachers who find material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

## **Dealing with bullying**

School staff, headteachers and governors are best placed to decide how best to respond to the particular issues that affect their pupils. There is no single solution to bullying which will suit all schools. Each case will be dealt in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy

## **Prevention**

A school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. Our school has a more sophisticated approach in which school staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

Due to the age of the children in our school they often need support with expressing themselves appropriately, dealing with friendship issues or social situations. In the event it is perceived that this is an ongoing issue all staff will:

- Notify the Headteacher immediately of any ongoing issues
- Record any issues relating friendship/bullying using the school's electronic system
- Speak jointly with parents with another member of staff/DSL about any concerns around their child's safety or wellbeing
- Report any positive/negative friendship seen on the playground between children with persistent issues
- Put in place additional pastoral support as necessary
- Undertake specific observations of children with persistent friendship/social difficulties
- Undertake 'voice of the child' meetings with the child following an incident to ensure they are able to express themselves appropriately and any further intervention is undertaken if necessary
- Update parents as necessary with any changes to their child's behaviour (positive or negative)

## **Implementation – What happens if a child thinks they are being bullied?**

*School:* The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Headteacher
- The Headteacher will interview all concerned and will log the incident in Behaviour on the school's system
- Parents will be kept informed
- Subsequent actions in response to the incident(s) will be planned in consultation with all parties concerned

*Parents:* Parents who have a concern around bullying must:

- read the school's antibullying policy to understand the school's procedures
- be specific on what steps they wish the school to take to support their child
- give the school time to investigate the incident(s) appropriately and respond
- bring any further concerns to the attention of the headteacher
- follow the school's complaints policy

*Pupils:* Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- reassuring the pupil
- offering of continuous pastoral support
- restoring self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the 'wrong choice' and need to change
- informing and supporting parents/carers in helping change the attitude of the pupil

The following disciplinary steps can be taken (in alignment with the school's behaviour policy):

- official warnings to cease offending – recorded on the school's system
- miss playtimes/lunchtimes – recorded on the school's system
- Exclusion: lunchtime exclusion (sent home for lunch), fixed-term exclusion or permanent exclusion – recorded on the school's system and reported to the local authority

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, whole school and class assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour and encourage positive relationships

### **Intervention - Support for pupils who are bullied**

All staff have a responsibility to support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, providing pastoral support on an adhoc or ongoing basis, provide informal counselling, being offered Therapeutic Play, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services, completing a Common Assessment Framework or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

### **Vulnerable pupils**

Bullying can happen to all children and young people and it can affect their social, mental and emotional health. School staff should support all pupils who are bullied. This means being alert to the effect any form of bullying can have and being especially alert to where it may have a severe impact. There is evidence to suggest that pupils that are badly bullied in school are more likely to be bullied out of school, for instance either on their way to or from school or through cyberbullying.

Some pupils are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference. Children in care that are frequently on the move may also be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. These young people are often the same young people who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying, for example those who are going through a personal or family crisis.

In addition, children with special educational needs or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all.

There will also be a range of other local or individual factors that result in some children being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others. Being aware of this will help to develop strategies to prevent bullying from happening.

The impact of bullying can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the social, mental and emotional health of the pupil.

### **Where bullying has a severe impact**

In some circumstances the consequences of bullying may lead to a child or young person experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. Our school makes appropriate provision for a child's short-term needs, including setting out what actions they are taking when bullying has had a serious impact on a child's ability to learn. If the bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the child or young person to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, then schools should consider whether the child will benefit from being assessed for SEN.

In July 2012 the cross Government No Health Without Mental Health: Implementation Framework was published. It describes the role that both schools and local authorities should play in supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice**

While bullied children will not be routinely considered as requiring SEN support, schools and where appropriate local authorities should provide support in a proportionate and tailored way to meet individual needs. The relevant statutory guidance, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, sets out how developing a graduated response to the varying levels of SEN among children and young people is the best way to offer support. Some bullied children will have SEN.

### **Separate on site provision**

Removing bullied children from school, even for a short time, disrupts their education and can make it difficult for them to reintegrate. It also fails to address the causes of the problem and can send the wrong message that victims of bullying are unwelcome. Absences arising as a result of bullying will be responded to sensitively.

### **Alternative provision**

In extreme cases, where the effects of bullying are so severe that it is not possible to reintegrate a child back into their school, then other arrangements must be made for the pupil to continue their education. In the first instance this may involve the transfer of the child to another mainstream school. Where a child has developed complex needs as a result of bullying, which cannot be met in mainstream education, then alternative provision may need to be arranged.

Local authorities must make other arrangements for children of compulsory school age who, for any reason, would not otherwise receive suitable education. Suitable education is defined as efficient education suitable to a child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. This education must be fulltime, unless this would not be in a child's best interests because of health needs. In these circumstances the education should be as close to fulltime as the child's needs allow and kept under review.

Separate statutory guidance on the use of alternative provision, issued in January 2013 sets out that parents, pupils and other professionals should be involved in decisions about the use of alternative provision. It also states that there should be clear objectives and arrangements for monitoring progress.

Alternative provision should have a rigorous focus on supporting children to continue their education whilst meeting their individual needs, including social, emotional and health needs. In the majority of cases the aim of alternative provision should be to support

reintegration back into mainstream education, working closely with pupils and their parents to agree a plan and timetable for return.

### **Intervention - Discipline and tackling underlying issues of bullying**

Our school applies disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account the age of the pupil, any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety **of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.**

### **Support for staff who are bullied**

It is important that schools take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils. But it is equally important that schools make it clear that bullying of staff, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, is unacceptable. The department have published a separate advice note which provides advice for headteachers and all school staff on how to protect themselves from cyberbullying and how to tackle it if it happens.

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or absence from school. Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying in schools.

Schools' staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.