



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

September 2023 - 2025



This policy has been written with reference to Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE 2017.

Statement of Intent

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. Our school aim 'together we will succeed' allows every child to achieve and fulfil their potential.

Our whole school values for the children of Medway is that Together we achieve, that Everyone is of equal worth, aim Achieve to your full potential and More diversity, more acceptance, a greater good

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. To deal with bullying, we will help everyone: to get on well together, to be polite to one another, respect and understand each other, to be considerate and kind to each other and to believe that everyone has the right to be who they are. Therefore, this policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We all have a responsibility to challenge racism and homophobia in our school. Action will only be successful if it forms part of a wider policy which is embedded within all school practices.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- It will ensure that action is taken to support the victims of racism/homophobic incidents and to deal with perpetrators appropriately.

What is Bullying?

We define bullying as intended physical or verbal aggressive behaviour that occurs 'several times on purpose.'

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. It is different from other types of aggressive behaviour because it is defined as something that happens more than once and is directed specifically at an individual or group. We define bullying as physical or verbally aggressive behaviour that occurs, 'Several Times on Purpose'. The school uses this definition to help children understand the seriousness of bullying compared to other unacceptable behaviours and provides the 'STOP' acronym that leads to children knowing they should 'Start Telling Other People.'

Bullying can be:

- Relational - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, rumours, social exclusion (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - damage to belongings, pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & call
Misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera and video facilities
- Material - Damage to others' belongings, extortion e.g. obtaining something, particularly money, through the use of force and/or threat

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'. It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), sexting (e.g. sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones) vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and 'trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online). It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

However it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:

- by facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.
- the potential for anonymity on the part of the bully. This can be extremely distressing for the victim
- the potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.
- through the knowledge that the data is in the world-wide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying
- the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying.
- the profile of the bully and target can be different to other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important.
- many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence so it is important the victim saves the information.

ICT support (Capacity to Learn) will ensure adequate safeguards are in place to filter and monitor inappropriate content and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead to safeguarding issues.

The Law:

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. Head teachers have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off the school site.

There is not a specific law which makes cyberbullying illegal but it can be considered a criminal offence under several different acts including Protection from Harassment Act (1997), Malicious Communications Act (1988), Communications Act (2003) Obscene Publications Act (1959) and Computer Misuse Act (1990).

A racist / homophobic incident may include:

- derogatory name-calling, insults and racist / homophobic jokes
- verbal abuse and threats
- physical assaults
- ridicule based on differences of colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, religion or language, sexuality
- refusal to co-operate with another because of any of the above differences
- stereotyping on the basis of colour, race, ethnicity, sexuality etc.
- racist / homophobic comments
- graffiti
- incitement of others to act in a racist / homophobic manner
- wearing racist / homophobic badges or insignia
- introducing racist / homophobic literature into school
- recruiting other students to racist / homophobic groups

Perpetrators may use different pretexts as the basis of their bullying, basing their comments or actions on:

- The religious background or faith of the person bullied
- A disability, perceived physical difficulty or Special Educational Need.
- The race of the victim: e.g. racist name calling, taunts, graffiti or gestures
- The sexuality of the victim: e.g. homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying

This stance against bullying is underpinned by our 'Single Equality Policy', which outlines and sets out our duties in terms of equal opportunities, race, disability and gender. This relates to the Single Equality Act (2010), which covers the eight strands of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender, gender-identity, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and sexual orientation.

Bullying can also take place through third person involvement e.g. another person being encouraged to take part in any of the behaviours above.

All staff should also be aware to the possibility of a member of staff bullying a child. Should anyone suspect that this is taking place this should be reported immediately to the Head teacher in person or via *CPOMs. Even if the victim of an incident does not complain, it should be treated as an incident if another person perceives it as such. For example, a teacher overhears a child calling another child a racist / homophobic term. The teacher records this as a racist incident, even though the abused child does not complain to him or her.

If the Head teacher is suspected of bullying, the matter should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Bullying is not:

As a school we define bullying as 'Several Times on Purpose.' Therefore, it is important to understand that bullying is not an odd occasion falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional 'joke' is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. However the correct process to resolve these situations needs to be followed, to prevent the situation from continuing (see procedure-reporting). Therefore through CPOMS – The school on line system for reporting incidences relating to Safeguarding for effective monitoring and provision CFW – Our in school Community, Family and Welfare team

the teaching of the values curriculum and PSHE we will aim for the children to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank to help the child's development. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

- Bullying hurts.
- Children can be affected in many different ways – physically and emotionally.
- No one deserves to be a victim of bullying.
- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- Pupils who are perpetrators of bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.
- Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.
- No incident that is, or appears to be racially motivated, should go unchallenged and every member of staff has a responsibility for responding to the situation.

Signs and Symptoms

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

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay someone who has asked them for money)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

The Role of the Headteacher and DSL

The head teacher develops anti bullying strategies in consultation with governors and key staff. Key to this is setting the school climate of collaboration, support and care so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour. The head teacher also ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The head teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments: for example, in assemblies or if an incident occurs and children may be sent to the head teacher.

They will

ensure that all incidents of cyberbullying both inside and outside school are dealt with and managed and/or escalated in line with the procedures set out in the school policy.

- ensure that all policies relating to safeguarding, including cyberbullying are reviewed and updated regularly
- ensure that all staff know that they need to report any issues concerning cyberbullying via CPOMS as normal practice
- ensure that all staff are aware of the Prevent Duties.
- provide training (using HM Government prevent e-learning training) so that staff feel confident to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to make a referral when a child is at risk.
- ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities by providing clear guidance for staff on the use of technology within school and beyond. All staff should sign to say they have read and understood the Staff Code of Conduct.

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The head teacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The head teacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request, at other times as necessary and also at scheduled meeting times throughout the academic year.

Details of the pattern and frequency of racist / homophobic incidents are held at school and will be reported to the LA on request and advise the police of any racist / homophobic incidents that may be categorised as crimes.

Procedures - Reporting

Children

- Children are encouraged to always treat bullying seriously.
- They are taught to 'Start Telling Other People,' by reporting possible bullying incidents to any member of staff they trust, a friend or a member of their family.
- They are taught how to keep themselves safe online and how to respond on online abuse.
- Children who are 'bystanders' are encouraged and taught to support their peers by reporting any suspected bullying to a member of staff they trust, a friend or a member of their family.

- They are taught to not ignore the bullying otherwise the bullying will keep happening and to tell the bully perpetrator to S.T.O.P if it is safe to do so.

Staff

- All incidents of suspected bullying will be reported by the member of staff that has the concern, usually through our CPOMS system. Incidents will then be investigated and dealt with by a member of the CFW team, or the school's learning mentor. This is so that they're able to effectively work alongside both the perpetrator and victim to support behaviour change. SLT will be involved where required. The member of staff dealing with the incident will also log their work onto the initial CPOM concern so that there is a clear log of actions taken.
- On *CPOMS, there are specific bullying categories, in which staff record all incidents of bullying that occur both in and out of class. These are dealt with by SLT, CFW Team or/and Learning Mentor, by the end of the school day and monitored for patterns of behaviour. We also record and deal with incidents that occur outside of school e.g. off the school premises, or online, appropriately. Therefore, the incident will be investigated by a member of CFW or SLT and appropriate actions will be taken, with the aim of sending a strong message to pupils that we do not tolerate bullying in or outside of school.
- in such a way that is reasonable, or on the children's way between school and home. Any incidences of bullying are investigated and dealt with and any adult who witnesses an act of bullying will record it via CPOMS.
- All staff are responsible for the health and well-being of the children and have a duty to respond seriously to any claim of bullying.
- If they are unable to investigate the matter must be **referred immediately** to a senior member of staff (phase leader, assistant headteacher, deputy headteacher or headteacher).
- Teaching Assistants should report to a class teacher or phase leader if they have any concerns about potential bullying.
- All other members of staff e.g. lunchtime supervisors and office and premises staff should record incidents of bullying, on to the bullying incident forms, located in the staffroom. These incidents should then be reported to the class teachers and the headteacher where there are any concerns about children's behaviour. These children should then be monitored during these periods of time to see if behaviours continue.
- Staff should make explicit that any racist / homophobic behaviour is unacceptable and contravenes the school's policy, culture and ethos.
- Racial harassment or any form of racist / homophobic behaviour from any member of staff towards any student, parents or another member of staff will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with as a serious breach of the school's disciplinary procedures. We recognise that appropriate training and other support will be necessary for all staff. When members of staff are found to have committed misconduct involving racial harassment they will face disciplinary sanctions up to and including dismissal.
- Where there is an outside perpetrator, staff should attempt to discuss the matter with them and if necessary refer them to school policy and/or the Head Teacher.

Parents

- Parents and carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.
- Parents and carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher or a member of the senior management team immediately.

- If parents or carers believe their child is a victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything.
- If parents are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school prospectus/handbook.
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, particularly if behaviour in school is repeated out of school, police will be consulted.

Governors

We expect that governors will:

- Be informed of the number and nature of incidents and the action taken to deal with them
- Support the Head teacher and the staff in the implementation of this policy.
- Be fully informed on matters concerning anti-bullying.
- Regularly monitor incident reports and actions taken to be aware of the effectiveness of this policy.
- Allocate an Anti-Bullying lead governors – Mr Sanjee De Silva

Procedures – Outcomes

Victim

- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated immediately and the alleged bullying stopped.
- Victims will be reassured that they have done nothing to deserve the bullying and that what may have happened is not their 'fault'
- The victim will be consulted with on how to rebuild relationships with the perpetrator if they want to do this.
- Referral through our Community, Family and Welfare Team or our two Learning Mentors may be considered appropriate.
- Following investigations, staff will periodically 'check in' with children that have been the victim of bullying to ensure that the child feels happy and secure at school.
- We recognise that members of staff can also experience racial harassment from students, from other staff, from parents, or members of the public. We will support them in the same way as we would students.

Perpetrator

- Most importantly, the perpetrator should be helped to realise that bullying will not be tolerated, that it must stop immediately and that there can be no re-occurrence. The level of response will vary dependent on the type of bullying and in relation to any previous incidents and/or involvement. For example:
- Children are helped to reflect upon their actions and to empathise with how the victim/ bullied child may feel through discussions and role-play.
- Where appropriate and possible we will ensure that the perpetrator will complete a piece of work around racism; this will explore positive role models, the BLM movement and the challenges faced by ethnic minority groups.

- Children that have bullied perpetrators of bullying are supported to modify their behaviour – this may be through structured lunchtimes including pastoral support and involvement of parents to reinforce the unacceptable nature of bullying.
- Other consequences may take place such as detention or loss of other ‘privileges’ in school.
- Temporary exclusion for one or more days may be considered by the headteacher if appropriate and bullying incidents have persisted.
- In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies.
- After incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place. The perpetrators’ behaviour will also be monitored by the class teacher and CFW team, and parents will be kept up-to-date on this matter.
- The school works closely with the local police to make sure that any incidents outside school are reported to the school so that children involved can then be monitored inside school as appropriate.

Parents

- The school’s anti-bullying policy is available for parents to access on the school website.
 - Parents / carers of both victim and perpetrator will be kept informed throughout the process by the key member/s of staff dealing with the incident. This will usually be member of the CFW team.
 - Close contact will be maintained with the victim’s parents or carers to ensure that the victim adjusts positively back to school life as quickly as possible.
 - Parent views will always be considered, but the school will stress that wherever possible reconciliation will be considered, in order to provide clear resolution for all concerned, while not condoning the bullying.
 - Parents are able to access the anti-bullying section of the school website, where they can view several advice leaflets and links to external web pages for advice.
 - At Medway, we have an open-door policy where parents are able to approach class teacher at the start and end of the school day regarding any concerns. Alternatively, parents can call the school office to arrange a convenient appointment with the class teacher, or a member of the CFW team.
- The CFW team also work alongside both pupils and families to support the victim and perpetrator as required. The work undertaken by the CFW team depends upon the individuality of each incident.

Reconciliation

- The perpetrator will be asked at a suitable point to apologise, in writing or in person.
- Children will be encouraged to reconcile any issues over a period of time so that any injustice can be rectified.

Procedures – Recording

- All behaviour incidents of concern are recorded through CPOMS. These are monitored by SLT to see if there are patterns of behaviour that may be regarded as bullying.
- In the first instance they can be recorded as a Bullying Concern, DSL’s monitoring the incident will then look at previous incidents and decide if the CONCERN needs to be changed to an INCIDENT. This ensures the STOP system is in place (several times on purpose.)

- The CPOMS system is live and active ensuring that actions and monitoring is undertaken.
- The SLT are responsible for ensuring CPOMS is used to best effect and therefore incidents of bullying are not missed.
- Periodic analysis of incidents measures the success of our policies on poor or challenging behaviour.
- Bullying Incidents are reported to both governors (three times a year) and the local authority once a year for rigour.

Prevention

Everyone involved in the life of the school must take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach by being supportive of each other, providing positive role models and conveying a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour (but not the pupil), and by being clear across the school that we follow school rules. All members of the school community are expected to report incidents of bullying. The SLT monitors classroom and playtime behaviours through CPOMS (and cases of bullying) and keep the teachers informed.

Staff have a vital role to play as they are at the forefront of behaviour management and supporting children's sense of well-being in school. They have the closest knowledge of the children in their care and should build up a relationship involving mutual support, trust and respect.

Racism and homophobia has an impact on the whole school community and on the wider community it serves. Visual evidences will be dealt with immediately (graffiti removed, racist literature / badges / insignia confiscated etc). There is regular and ongoing training and discussion of the issues and a sharing of the school's response amongst all staff, students and the local community. This common approach will include communication with parents and community members and liaison with outside agencies.

We aim to help children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, children may:

- Be involved in discussion about writing school rules
- Be involved in devising class rules at the start of each year
- Sign a home-school agreement
- Write stories or poems or draw pictures about bullying
- Read stories about bullying or have them read to a class or assembly
- Use role play and 'hot-seating' to help create feelings of empathy
- Have discussions about bullying and why it should not happen.
- Engage in developing peer support
- Use the CFW team to engage and support parents, including providing advice and looking for signs.
- Use lunch time staff, including managers to ensure that playground activities are inclusive, celebrate diversity and acceptance
- Use our Care Coordinator to promote tolerance.

The school has a range of strategies in place to help children work and behave co-operatively in order to minimise the possibility of bullying taking place.

- Assemblies addresses current issues and values within our school.
- We take part in the National Anti-bullying week each year, involving all children in discussions about acceptable behaviours and ensuring all children know what procedures should be followed.

- The school uses a values led curriculum to provide children with more opportunities to discuss their feelings and attitudes and to help create a positive, inclusive climate in school, which encourages co-operative behaviour
- The school has a clear behaviour policy that rewards positive behaviour.
- Above all children are encouraged to 'Start Telling Other People' if they feel they are being bullied or if someone they know is being bullied.
- Staff receive appropriate training
- Analysis of data through CPOMs
- School surveys conducted with children
- We have achieved our "Positive and Peaceful Places" anti-bullying award.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The anti-bullying policy is reviewed every two years.

On request, the head teacher reports to governors data showing the effectiveness of the policy:

- the overall number of incidents;
- frequency of incidents;
- places where incidents have occurred;
- times when incidents have occurred;
- specific groups who have bullied; and
- specific groups who have been bullied.

All incidents which involve a member of a minority ethnic group will be monitored to ensure that potentially racist incidents are not overlooked.

On a day-to-day basis, the implementation of this policy is monitored by the head teacher and staff in key roles.