Brookburn Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

'Every child must be protected from all forms of violence and abuse.'
Article 19, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Adopted: January 2020

Next Review Date: March 2026

Statement of intent

At Brookburn, we believe all our children have the right to learn in a supportive, safe and caring environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental health. We actively promote a climate of co-operation and positive behaviour to reduce the number of incidents and likelihood of bullying occurring. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

If bullying does occur, all pupils, staff and parents/carers should be confident to tell someone about it and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell someone they trust.

Someone a child trusts may be:

- A parent/ carer or another member of the family
- A member of the school staff
- A Young Leader
- A friend

Someone trustworthy may be:

- Good at listening
- Caring
- Responsible
- Helpful and supportive
- Understanding
- Calm

We believe in restorative approaches to deal with incidents of bullying alongside appropriate sanctions. The basic ethos of such approaches is to:

- Ensure that children have the chance to understand the harm that they have done to others.

- Give the children who have caused harm the chance to put things rights and become an accepted member of the community again.

We believe that by understanding the effects of our actions on others we can change for the better, strengthen our relationships and build a strong sense of community.

Bullying is a complex issue for the whole school community. At Brookburn we have a clear policy that outlines a whole school approach to ensure sensitivity, consistence and clear communication.

WHAT INFORMS OUR POLICY

This policy is based on DfE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying', July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2025 and 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' guidance. 'Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools' has also been considered.

Policy Objectives:

- This policy outlines what Barlow Hall Primary School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- This policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community.
- We are committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Communication Strategy- Behaviour
- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equality Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Digital Safeguarding Policy

Links to legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which sets out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education Act 2002 Section 175
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006, 2011
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018

Aims and Objectives:

Our Anti-Bullying policy will prevent and reduce acts of bullying and in the rare cases that bullying occurs have clearly communicated and understood procedures for dealing with the victim and the perpetrator. Victims and perpetrators will learn how to protect themselves and make changes in their behaviour.

- We will ensure that everyone at Brookburn is aware of the importance of their own and others' personal safety.
- We will raise awareness of and define bullying as well as gaining an understanding as to why some children bully.
- We will take positive action through our personal development curriculum to prevent bullying.
- All our children know that they have the right to feel safe; regardless of their background, colour, disability, religion or ability.
- The children and adults at Brookburn will speak out if we have a concern about our own or others' safety.
- Everyone in our school community will help to create an environment in which we can learn, play and enjoy the company of others in safety.
- We have developed a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may occur, including reporting back to parents promptly.

- We discuss, monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.

Definition of bullying

Bullying can be defined as 'behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally'. ('Preventing and Tackling Bullying', DfE, July 2017)

Bullying can be:

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, racist remarks, taunting)
- Non-verbal (e.g. intimidation through gesture, sending written threats)
- Indirect (e.g. excluding people from groups and spreading malicious stories/rumours, including text and phone communications)
- Cyber-bullying (e.g. online, mobile phone bullying and gaming)
  Bullying is recognised as a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

Bullying is not:

- A disagreement between friends that results in a temporary break down in relationships.
- Isolated incidents – fights, pushing, name calling etc.

There are a range of reasons why some children may be more vulnerable to bullying which include:

- Religious or cultural reasons
- Gender- sexual, sexist, transphobic bullying
- Sexual orientation- homophobic language
- Disabilities and/or special educational needs- See SEND policy
- Appearance or health conditions
- Home circumstances

Staff can also be the target of bullying by pupils, parents and other staff members. We recognise that tackling bullying is a whole school issue.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is when a person or a group or people uses the internet, mobile phones, online games or any other kind of digital technology to threaten, tease, upset or humiliate someone else. The school will help prepare pupils for the risks involved with using technology while promoting learning and social opportunities. Cyber bullying can take place 24 hours a day, seven days a week so it is particularly important that we teach our children how to stay safe online and what to do if they are worried. Any issues will be dealt with in line with procedures outlined in the e-safety policy.

Curriculum

Our curriculum promotes co-operation and positive behaviour through:

- PSHCE lessons
- Philosophy for Children sessions
- RE- particularly to address faith-based bullying and islamophobia
- SRE to reduce sexual bullying and homophobic bullying
- Computing- to raise awareness and reduce incidents of cyberbullying
- Assemblies
- Specific nurture groups led by the Learning Mentors
- Regular anti-bullying events and workshops

Safeguarding children and young people

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concerns when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.' Where this is the case, all school staff will follow Brookburn's Safeguarding procedures. (See Safeguarding Policy)

Criminal Law

Although bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassment, threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence. (e.g. The Protection from Harassment Act 1997, The Malicious Communications Act 1988, The Communications Act 2003, The Public Order Act 1986)

The Headteacher will seek assistance from the police if an offence has been committed.

Signs and symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are 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 bus to/from school
- Changes in their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts to run away/ threatens suicide
- Cries themselves to sleep/ has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning or claims to feel ill
- Change in attitude/ lack of progress in learning
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Is nervous or jumpy when a text message or cyber message is received

Statutory Duty of Schools and Shared Responsibility

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1988 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of pupils, parents/ carers and staff. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of us all to identify and respond to incidences of bullying and take steps to ensure the situation does not continue.

Procedures

The following steps may be taken by the school when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with as soon as possible by the member of staff that has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Assistant Head for each phase. They will speak to all concerned and record the incident
- Class teachers will be informed
- Parents will be informed

What can children do?

- Make informed decisions as to what constitutes bullying.
- Raise any issues through a variety of communication channels including:
    - Reporting to an appropriate adult in school
    - Reporting to an appropriate peer
    - Discussing at home with a parent/carer
    - Opportunities at circle time

What can parents do?

- Make informed decisions as to what constitutes bullying.
- Attend parent focus groups to improve communication and understanding.
- Inform the class teacher, in the first instance, of any concerns.
- Precede through more formal communication channels, with the Deputy Head or Headteacher, if your concerns continue.
- Support the school's Restorative Approaches to anti-social behaviour.
- Support sanctions taken by the school.
- Refer to the 'Parental Guide to Anti-Bullying' (See appendix 2).

All staff will follow procedures as outlined below.

Procedures for responding to bullying:

Appropriate sanctions

Refer to the school's Behaviour Policy. Proven cases of bullying will be dealt through the sanctions outlined in the Policy. This can include in extreme cases fixed term and permanent exclusion. It is important that parents/ carers of both the victim and the perpetrator are informed of any sanctions taken.

The following procedures follow a sequential process to reflect the severity of the incident.

All procedures follow L.E.A.F ethos

L. Listen – Ask in turn what has happened to you?
E. Effects – How has everyone been affected?
A. Amends – What do we need to do and say to make things better?
F. Follow Up – Are things still better?

Restorative Discussion
This is an informal, quick, on the spot discussion, following the above LEAF Structure. This can be used for lower level/one off incidents.

Mini-conference
This is a discussion/meeting held in an appropriate space away from the rest of the children's peers. It will involve children and a member of staff only. This will give both parties a chance to discuss an incident and how they were made to feel as a consequence of the other person's actions. Staff leading this Mini Conference will refer to 'Barlow Hall's Restorative Enquiry for a Mini Conference', which outlines the three stages to be followed (see appendix 4).

Mediation

This approach is to be used where two people or groups are in conflict with each other and there is no clear victim or perpetrator. Full consent of the children will be necessary.

1. The Mediator explains the process, ground rules are established, and an assessment is made as to whether mediation is the correct course of action.
2. A explains how they feel to B
3. B summarises to A their understanding of how A feels.
4. The Mediator checks that A feels satisfied that B understands their feelings.
5. Repeat the above in reverse.
6. A and B work out together what they can do to make things better.
7. A and B sign. A review date is set.
8. The Mediator makes regular checks on both A and B.
9. Review takes place. If necessary further action is initiated.

Complaints procedure

1. Parent/Carer to contact the child's class teacher.
2. Parent/Carer to contact the Headteacher or in her absence the Deputy Head.
3. In the rare instance that Parent/Carers remain unhappy contact the Chair Brookburn's Governing Body in writing, outlining your concerns. (Details of contact can be made through school's admin team)

Guidance for pupils

If you believe you or someone you know is a target of bullying, you must speak to a trusted adult as soon as possible. This person could be your parent/ carer or any member of staff in school.

Guidance for parents

It is vital that parents/carers and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be bullying. If parents believe their child is the victim or the perpetrator of bullying, they can take the following steps:

- Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted to speak to your child
- Tell them that you are worried about them
- Ask them if they are being bullied or if they are bullying someone else and if they are how important it is to share this
- If they tell you they are being bullied or they are bullying someone else, remember that this is not an easy thing to talk about or admit to
- Let them know that they have a right to get help and that you will help them yourself and support them in getting help from other organisations
- Be prepared to listen without judging, and be sensitive to your child's needs and fears
- Encourage and help your child to record and report any incident of bullying that they experience to you and a member of staff at school depending on where it is happening and who is doing the bullying
- Tell your child never to endanger themselves by standing up to bullies in a situation where they are outnumbered
- Be prepared to ask the school to make a safety plan (see appendix)

Parents should contact a member of staff as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged which may involve other relevant members of staff. If the incident occurs during the school holidays, Brookburn Primary School reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which impacts in school. For specific information on how to respond to cyber bullying, see e-safety policy.

Involvement of pupils

We will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Publicise the details of help lines and websites.

- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

Liaison with parents/ carers

We will:

- Ensure that parents/ carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying
- Ensure parents/ carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use this effectively
- Ensure parents/ carers know where to access independent advice about bullying
- Work with parents/ carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying
- Consult with parents/ carers through questionnaires and newsletters

Bullying outside school premises

'School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport or outside the local shops.' DfE Preventing and tackling bullying, 2017

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or local authority. If the misbehaviour could be criminal, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying the member of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Sexual Violence and Harassment

Guidelines for dealing with these incidents are set out in the Connect Alliance Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Child on Child Abuse Policy.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The School Governing Body and Head Teacher are responsible for the annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Headteacher will take responsibility for the day to day monitoring of the Policy. Parents/Carers, pupils and staff will be surveyed as to the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy on a regular basis. (e.g. workshops, lessons, assemblies, questionnaires, School Council and Young Leader work)

Success indicators will include:

- Willingness to report incidents of bullying
- Reduced duration of bullying
- Reduced frequency of bullying incidents
- Pupil's perceptions that the school is prepared to take action

- Bystander action/increased sense of collective responsibility
- Improved attendance
- Improved participation and achievement
- Reduced fixed term and permanent