



Three Towers
An Alternative Provision Academy
Expanding Horizons

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Statutory: Yes

Required on website: Yes

THREE TOWERS



Policy Document Version Control

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1 Introduction

In a large organisation like Three Towers the way in which each person, whether a learner, member of staff, volunteer or visitor conducts themselves in and around the site is important for the well-being of everyone connected with the school.

Preventing and responding to all forms of bullying is clearly a critical part of meeting our wider responsibility to promote well-being and demonstrate Fundamental British Values including tolerance and acceptance.

Bullying is an unacceptable, anti-social behaviour which affects everyone and therefore will not be tolerated. Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental and physical health.

Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, schools can help to create safe, disciplined environments where learners are able to learn, and everyone can fulfil their potential. It is a basic entitlement for our learners that they receive their education free from humiliation, oppression, and abuse.

We are a “telling” school – bullying is too important not to report.

We expect **everyone** to contribute to the provision of a safe, caring, supportive and protective environment in which everyone can work and learn in an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying behaviour.

By creating a learning climate based on being respectful and safe, it is our intention to create and sustain an ethos which minimises and controls bullying by taking effective action when dealing with incidents and ultimately to prevent bullying by creating conditions in which bullying is less likely to occur.

There are several very important reasons for challenging bullying behaviour:

- *the safety and happiness of learners:* When learners are bullied their lives are made miserable. They may suffer injury. They may be unhappy about coming to school. Over time, they are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem.
- *educational attainment and achievement:* The unhappiness of bullied learners is likely to affect their concentration and learning: progress will be checked. Some children will avoid bullying by not coming to school; opportunities for social interaction and involvement in extra-curricular activities will suffer.
- *providing a model for helpful behaviour:* If learners observe bullying behaviour apparently going on unchallenged, other learners may learn that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want. Those learners who are being bullied may interpret the school's inaction as condoning unacceptable behaviour. Also, bullies need to be disciplined and counselled before they take their anti-social tendencies out of school.
- *confirming our reputation as an effective caring school:* No school can claim with absolute confidence that 'there is no bullying here.' The real issue is that the school

needs to demonstrate, through policy and practice, that it responds quickly and effectively to bullying.

2 Aims

We aim to:

- provide a safe, happy and supportive learning/working environment where each member of the school community is valued, and where learners are able to develop self-respect and self-control;
- engender respect for and tolerance of others – regardless of differences of race, gender, culture or religion;
- help learners acquire attitudes and skills (such as inter-personal and conflict resolution) relevant to their adult life;
- encourage and exercise moral values in dealing with others;
- reduce or prevent incidents of bullying;
- provide a clearly defined framework for dealing with the victims and the perpetrators of incidents of bullying;
- ensure that this framework is understood and trusted by learners, parents and staff (anti-bullying awareness);
- counter the ‘myths’ about bullying.

3 Legislation, Guidance & Statutory Responsibilities

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Schools’ duty to promote good behaviour: Section 89 Education and Inspections Act 2006 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/89> and Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made>
- Power to tackle poor behaviour outside school <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/90>
- The Equality Act 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- DfE (2017) ‘Preventing and tackling bullying’ [Preventing and tackling bullying \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/624442/preventing-and-tackling-bullying.pdf)
- DfE (2018) ‘Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools’ [Mental health and behaviour in schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/624442/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools.pdf)
- DfE ‘Keeping children safe in education’ [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/624442/keeping-children-safe-in-education.pdf)

We understand that under the Equality Act 2010, we have a responsibility to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual 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.

We understand that under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, charges could be brought against us if we allow the rights of learners to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA and understands that they cannot do this without fully involving the whole staff.

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, which 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 crimes.

4 Roles & Responsibilities

All members of the Three Towers community are equally responsible for the implementation of the policy and for taking action on bullying.

4.1 The Local Governing Committee (LGC) supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from school. This policy makes it very clear that the LGC does not tolerate bullying taking place and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately. The LGC is responsible for ensuring:

- this policy is implemented and monitored;
- this policy is evaluated and reviewed so that it does not discriminate against any learners based on their protected characteristics or backgrounds;
- that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction;
- that the school is inclusive and adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference;
- the school keeps accurate records of all incidents of bullying;
- any bullying data is analysed to establish patterns, and this policy is reviewed in light of these;
- the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to perform the duties of the role;
- appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively;
- that learners are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

4.2 The Headteacher understands that 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, and so they are responsible for:

- setting our “climate” of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely;
- reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance;

- devising and implementing our anti-bullying strategy, using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures;
- analysing any data about bullying at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented;
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.
- reporting to the LGC about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

4.3 All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously. Staff attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying. Staff actively support anti-bullying strategies by teaching children directly about safeguarding issues and cyber-bullying. They:

- are crucial in establishing positive relationships within their groups and encouraging them to recognise and regard bullying as unacceptable;
- must seize opportunities to address bullying through individual interventions and PSHE curriculum as well as through subject lessons when appropriate opportunities arise;
- must be vigilant in their supervisory duties and must visit places where bullying is most likely to occur on a regular basis to reduce the opportunities for bullying;
- must intervene to prevent incidents from taking place;
- must log incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school on ClassCharts.

If staff witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied.

Staff access regular training (e.g. PRICE training), which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

4.4 Heads of House are responsible for:

- corresponding and meeting with parents/carers where necessary;
- providing a point of contact for learners and/or parents/carers when more serious bullying incidents occur.

4.5 Teaching staff are responsible for:

- being alert to social dynamics in their class;
- being available for learners who wish to report bullying;
- providing follow-up support after bullying incidents;
- being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the learner's heads of house of such observations;
- refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying;
- understanding the composition of learner groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying;
- reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a learner for support.

4.6 Learners are expected to:

- follow school policies and procedures;

- promote all school values and our ethos including tolerance and mutual respect;
- regularly discuss anti-bullying strategies in personal development sessions and/or interventions;
- report incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying to staff whether directly involved or witnessing it and need to see this as responsible behaviour rather than “telling tales/snitching/grassing;”
- not making counter-threats if they are the target of bullying;
- walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other learners in incidents or avoiding getting involved in incidents that they should not be involved in;
- keeping evidence of bullying, including cyberbullying.

4.7 Parents/carers are expected to:

- support our approach on anti-bullying by informing their child’s Head of House if they have any concerns that their child is the target of bullying or is involved in bullying in any way;
- being watchful of their child’s behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing their child’s Head of House of any changes;
- notify us of any factors which may affect the behaviour of their child out of school hours;
- support their child by receiving phone calls, attending meetings and regular reviews;
- be aware of and support this Anti-Bullying Policy.

Information for parents/carers is available on our website

5 Defining Bullying

5 Bullying

Bullying does not have a legal definition, but the Department for Education defines bullying as

“behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can involve an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators having control over the relationship, which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power may be physical, psychological, derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate.”

(DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying,” July 2017)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1069688/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

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. It is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period;
- **Intent:** the perpetrator 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 making it difficult to defend against.

Vulnerable learners 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. Vulnerable learners may include, but are not limited to:

- learners who are adopted;
- learners suffering from a health problem;
- learners with caring responsibilities;
- learners from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds;
- learners with or perceived to have particular characteristics.

This policy covers all types of bullying behaviours including but not limited to:

• name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; • gossiping; • spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. • excluding people from groups; • producing offensive graffiti; • taking belongings; • kicking; • hitting;	<i>Children have also described bullying as:</i> • being teased; • being ignored or left out; • being pushed or threatened; • getting abusive or threatening text messages or emails; • being forced to do things; • being a target because of their religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance, ethnicity or race.
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This includes the same inappropriate and harmful behaviours expressed via digital devices (cyberbullying) such as the sending of inappropriate messages by phone, text, Instant Messenger, through websites and social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading images by mobile phone or via the internet.

6 Types of Bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Bullying takes many forms:

Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Prejudice-based & discriminatory	Taunts, gestures, graffiti, or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g., gender, race, sexuality) or perceived characteristic
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos (including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video), or inappropriate touching
Direct or Indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, insulting gestures, or mimicry;
Cyber	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites, devices or via images, audio, video, or written content generated by artificial intelligence (AI) Refer to Section 7

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

6.1 Racist bullying is bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986. The 1999 MacPherson Report defined it as:

“any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.”

Racist bullying in schools can range from ill-considered remarks, which are not intended to be hurtful, to deliberate physical attacks causing serious injury. Incidents can include:

- verbal abuse by name calling and offensive mimicry;
- racist jokes;
- wearing of offensive badges, insignia or clothing;
- bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines to school;
- racist graffiti.

Racist violence, harassment and abuse are closely related to, and sometimes difficult to distinguish from, bullying.

Racist bullying can be identified by the motivation of the bully, the language used, and/or by the fact that victims are singled out because of the colour of their skin, the way they talk, their ethnic grouping or by their religious or cultural practices. The success of our multi-cultural society depends upon the children of today growing up to be adults who respect difference and are prepared to speak out against racism.

Staff need to be especially aware of any such behaviour. Perpetrators of perceived racist bullying should be referred to the CLT.

6.2 Homophobic and Biophobic bullying is bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Homophobic language is a common form of homophobic bullying. The word "Gay" can be used to illustrate a negative response to an activity and object as well as a person. This is unacceptable and stands in our way of promoting positive diversity. We use a consistent approach in tackling any kind of inappropriate language and homophobic language is included.

6.3 Sexist bullying is 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.

6.4 Sexual bullying is bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes. It affects both boys and girls. Boys are also victims – of girls and other boys.

In general, sexual bullying is can be characterised by, but not limited to:

- telling sexual stories/making sexual remarks;
- abusive/sexualised name calling;
- looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty;
- inappropriate and uninvited touching e.g., deliberately brushing against someone;
- sexual innuendo, “jokes,” propositions and/or taunting;
- pornographic material – displaying images or video of a sexual nature;
- graffiti with sexual content;
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence);

- online sexual harassment, e.g., creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats;
- sexual assault.

Sexual bullying can sometimes be the result of immaturity, especially amongst boys. The whole area of puberty, gender relations and emerging sexual attraction is something that will be explored through our PSHE and science curriculum in line with our RSHE Policy.

Staff must:

- be aware that
 - learners of any age and gender can abuse their peers;
 - abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings;
 - abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment, and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence;
- be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening;
- take all instances equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims;
- never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up,” and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g., as “boys being boys,” as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.
- always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual bullying can also be related to sexual orientation. Staff must:

- challenge sexual and homophobic language;
- explore issues of diversity and difference through the formal curriculum;
- guarantee confidentiality unless doing so will compromise safeguarding.

Learners will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a learner has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to the local authority’s Children’s Social Care services and potentially the police as outlined in our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

6.6 Ableist bullying is bullying behaviour that focusses on another person’s disability or support needs i.e. bullying of a learner who has a physical or mental impairment (which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.) Children with SEN and disabilities may;

- be adversely affected by negative attitudes to disability and perceptions of difference;
- find it more difficult to resist bullies;
- be more isolated, not have many friends;
- not understand that what is happening is bullying.

6.7 Prejudicial bullying is bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g., religion or mental health issues.

6.8 Relational bullying is bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

6.9 Socioeconomic bullying is bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents'/carers' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived “quality” of their clothing or belongings.

7 Cyber-bullying

This is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself. It can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target learners, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Seven categories of cyber-bullying have been identified:

- text message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening, intimidating, upsetting or cause discomfort;
- picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. This involves amongst others
 - “happy slapping” - filming and sharing physical attacks;
 - disclosure of private sexual photographs/videos with the intent to cause distress;
- phone call bullying via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified;
- email bullying uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them;
- chat room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room;
- bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online;
- bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and social networking sites.

The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms. Cyberbullying may include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- *possible extensive scale and scope* – learners may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online;

- *the anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying* – learners may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times;
- *the person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is* – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and learners may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity;
- *the perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying* – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to learners crossing boundaries without realising;
- *the target of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened* – learners may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator.

Many of the signs of cyberbullying are the same as those of other types of bullying; however, staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a learner is being cyberbullied:

- avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is nearby;
- acting in a secretive manner when using the computer/mobile phone;
- spending excessive amounts of time on the computer/mobile phone;
- becoming upset or angry when the computer/mobile phone is taken away.

Parents/carers can access annual online training sessions to educate them on the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying.

While other forms of bullying remain prevalent, cyber-bullying is already a significant issue for many young people. We recognise that staff, parents and learners need to work together to prevent this and to tackle it whenever it occurs. We will ensure that:

- the curriculum teaches learners about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely including personal rights;
- all e-communications used on the school site or as part of school activities off-site are monitored;
- clear policies are set about the use of mobile phones at school and at other times when young people are under the school's authority;
- internet blocking technologies are continually updated, and harmful sites blocked;
- we work with learners and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely, taking account of local and national guidance and good practice;
- security systems are in place to prevent images and information about learners and staff being accessed improperly from outside school;
- we work with police and other partners on managing cyber-bullying.

ICT and Mobile Phones:

If a cyber-bullying incident directed at a child occurs using e-mail or mobile phone technology, either inside or outside school time, we will take the following steps:

- advise the child not to respond to the message;
- refer to relevant policies, e.g., e-safety/acceptable use, anti-bullying and apply appropriate sanctions;

- secure and preserve any evidence;
- inform the sender's e-mail service provider;
- notify parents of the children involved;
- consider delivering a parent workshop for the school community;
- consider informing the Police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of the offence. The school recognises that some cyber-bullying activities could be a criminal offence under a range of laws.

If malicious or threatening comments are posted on an Internet site or social networking site about a learner or member of staff, we will also:

- inform and request that the comments be removed if the site is administered externally;
- secure and preserve any evidence;
- endeavour to trace the origin and inform the Police as appropriate;
- instigate the vexatious complaints policy.

Staff and learners should not respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents but should record evidence of the incident to assist the investigation e.g., taking screenshots. Where offensive content is posted online, the person targeted (staff or learner) is also encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal. Where the person who has posted it is known to the school, we will request they remove it directly.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, Three Towers has the right to examine and delete files from learners' 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. In these cases, we will follow the DfE's guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation.

All learning at home will follow procedures outlined in the Remote Education Policy. During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of learners staying safe online and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

7.1 Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, learners and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. We recognise that AI has many uses to help children learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

We view cyberbullying, including any use of AI to bully learners with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

8 Prevention & Raising Awareness

8.1 Prevention is a prominent aspect of our anti-bullying approach. It is vital that staff strive to create a climate of trust, inclusion and acceptance within their classrooms. It is also critically important for staff to model inclusive behaviour in their relationships both with other adults and children and young people. Of course, for the vast majority of staff this is already part of their established practice.

Staff can do much to prevent the emergence of bullying, including but not limited to:

- acting professionally by modelling the positive behaviours desired in our young people – allowing them to see you practice what you preach;
- using time in lessons to help uphold the positive ethos of the school – staff are there to help young people make better sense of the world around them;
- letting learners know that you will not tolerate bullying;
- staff having a presence in and around the building making sure that there are no areas left unsupervised;
- being alert to, and addressing, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst learners, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour;
- offering an ‘trusted adult’ approach allowing learners to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident;
- ensuring potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g., mental health issues;
- intervening to prevent nudging, play fighting and other such physical expressions;
- putting a stop to obvious teasing, name-calling and other verbal banter that so easily causes annoyance and offence;
- reading and acting upon information provided;
- being aware of the group dynamics – watching how learners interact;
- encouraging co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work as appropriate;
- adjust seating plans and groupings in a way that prevents instances of bullying developing;
- using praise, merits and other rewards to promote positive behaviours and attitudes, ‘catch them doing something good;’
- provide opportunities to extend friendship groups and social interactions through electives, social time and enrichment activities.

8.2 Raising Awareness

8.2.1 For learners, we raise awareness through the taught curriculum, particularly through PSHE, life skills and digital skills lessons, as well as through posters, leaflets and personalised interventions. We cover the following aspects of bullying:

- healthy and respectful relationships, including:
 - boundaries and consent;
 - how to recognize abusive relationships and coercive control;
 - harmful sexual behaviour, the concepts involved and why they are always unacceptable and the laws relating to it;
- different forms of bullying (physical, emotional, virtual etc.) including various scenarios and ideas for how to avoid/cope with them;
- recognising and building resilience;
- body confidence and self-esteem;
- stereotyping, prejudice and equality;
- online safety;

- supporting and fundraising for ChildLine.

Teaching sessions include discussions, games, films, creative work and quizzes. Learners are encouraged to recognise bullying in all its forms, reflect on this and put forward suggestions for coping with bullying that are appropriate and in line with our ethos.

At school, we also model respect and tolerance at all times and deal with any incidents of bullying in a timely and positive way

8.2.2 For Parents/Carers it is important that we share information about our stance on bullying and support offered by the school. Those who are concerned that their child might be bullied or who suspect that their child may be bullying others, should contact the school immediately. They also have a responsibility to support this policy and to encourage their child to be a positive member of the school. Further information can be obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

8.3 Common Indicators of Bullying are included in staff training, so all staff should be aware of the many signs which may indicate that a learner is being bullied including but not limited to:

• changes their usual routine, behaviour and/or attitude (incl. at home) - moodiness and irritability; unusually aggressive, short-tempered or disruptive; lack of eye contact; depression; reluctant to socialise; becoming withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence and a reluctance to explain why; becomes clingy; asks for or steals money; • bullies other children or siblings; • appear continually tired (perhaps due to disturbed/lack of sleep induced by worry); • repeatedly saying they feel ill especially in the mornings: e.g. headaches, stomach aches; • complaints of hunger (possibly indicating that dinner money is being taken); • lack of appetite or stops eating; • attempts, threatens, talks about suicide; • threats of or actual self-harm;	• goes missing from home; • unwillingness to attend school; • deterioration in attendance/truancy/school refusal; • changing routes to and from school - not wanting to travel on the school bus; frightened walking to and from school; • frequent injuries (e.g., unexplained cuts and bruises); • items of clothing, personal property and/or schoolwork that are damaged or lost more often than considered normal; • money/possessions going missing; • slowing/sudden deterioration of, or disinterest in schoolwork/educational attainment; • unwillingness or afraid to use internet or mobile phone, becoming nervous and jumpy if a cyber message is received.
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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. Learners who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour. Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a learner is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- they have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated;
- they have been the victim of abuse;
- their academic performance has started to fall, and they are showing signs of stress.

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they must notify the learner's Head of House, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

9 Responding to Incidents of Bullying

Staff treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. They will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one learner towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will respect learners' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others (excepting parents/carers), unless the learner has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a learner is in danger, e.g., of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9.1 Responding & Investigating

We are a 'telling' school. All learners should be encouraged to report bullying to any trusted adult or to a peer/friend who will then alert staff so that the matter can be dealt with rather than suffer in silence and/or talk to someone at home. Learners can tell:

- friends/peers;
- older/other learners;
- staff/trusted adult;
- parents/carers - It is important that parents are informed.

Learners must be listened to, and reports of bullying taken seriously and ACTED UPON AT ALL TIMES BY ALL STAFF.

Incidents of bullying must be **dealt with promptly by the member of staff to whom it has been reported** and information regarding the incident should be noted on ClassCharts for both the target and perpetrator(s) and communicated in the following way:

Trusted adult → Form/Class tutor → Head of House → CLT

If a learner is injured, members of staff must deal with the injury first including, if necessary, seeking a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries, and treatment if required.

Indicators, allegations or incidents of bullying must be investigated promptly. Staff must listen carefully to all accounts; model non-bullying/non-confrontational behaviours and remain neutral throughout the investigation: premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgmental at this stage.

Investigation should include the following practical steps:

- encourage the target to co-operate fully in identifying the bullies as the best way of securing the target's safety and that of others in the future;
- interview the target, alleged perpetrator and any witnesses. Staff should:
 - separately in a room/area that allows for privacy during interviews;
 - for serious incidents have another member of staff present during the investigation/interview;
 - establish with the target, as precisely as possible:
 - ✚ what led up to the incident(s);
 - ✚ what happened during the incident(s);
 - ✚ where and when the incident(s) took place;
 - ✚ who was involved, including witnesses;

- ✚ how long/often this has been happening; and
- ✚ where appropriate, what steps can reasonably be taken to avoid similar situations in the future;
- ask individuals to make a written record of the incident, signing and dating it (this may need neutral/non-leading prompts with open questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture);
- interview learners individually where allegations of bullying are made about a group - staff must ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the learners being interviewed, including electronic communication;
- inform all learners involved that they must not discuss the interview with other learners;
- the headteacher will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim;
- parents/carers of the bully/bullies, the target and any witnesses should be informed;
- bullies and targets may be counselled together if appropriate and both parties and their parents agree;
- the outcomes of any investigation must be communicated to all those involved - everybody involved must see action being taken. Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

9.2 Sanctions may be applied for incidents of bullying, in line with our Behaviour and Relationships Policy. If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying took place, the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.

Wherever possible, we will attempt reconciliation through a restorative approach and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the target's full consent. Discretion will be used here; targets will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

If a restorative approach is not appropriate or is refused by either party, the perpetrator will be informed of the type of sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying continues. Sanctions used range from a reprimand to suspension or in extreme cases a permanent exclusion.

As far as possible we will avoid unnecessarily criminalising learners for bullying or abusive behaviour as young people with criminal records may/can face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The school's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future. However, the police may investigate any criminal aspect of incidents deemed serious.

All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions and should be conducted

simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future. Staff will informally monitor the learners involved over the next few weeks.

9.3 Persistent Bullying

Where learners do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, the CLT will take tougher action to deal with persistent and violent bullying. Sanctions might include but are not limited to:

• detentions; • anti-bullying contracts; • withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges; • removal from the group; • withholding participation in any school trips or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum;	• change of provision including a twilight timetable; • suspension; • permanent exclusion* – where serious violence and/or persistent, serious bullying is involved. <i>*Permanent exclusion for serious and persistent bullying will be an exceptional event.</i>
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9.4 Bullying outside of school can happen and have the same devastating effect as that inside school. The headteacher has a specific statutory power to sanction learners 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 learners' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member. Staff have the power to sanction learners for misbehaving outside of the school premises.

This policy covers learners on all school activities including vocational placements; whilst travelling to and from school; on curriculum activities including residential trips and off-site visits. It also includes behaviour between learners outside of school that may impact on the orderly and effective daily workings of school e.g., on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only sanction the learner on school premises, or elsewhere when the learner is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g., on a school trip.

The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a learner. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

9.5 Recording Incidents

Incidents of bullying should be recorded by individual staff using ClassCharts. Investigation documents should be scanned into the relevant learners' folder. Racist incidents must be recorded and reported separately to the CLT. We will ensure that robust records are kept regarding all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g., sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

All decisions and actions recorded will be reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain learners that may need to be managed, e.g., with pastoral support;
- reflecting on whether cases could have been managed better and using these reflections to inform future practice;

- considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g., whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this;
- considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise;
- responding to any complaints about how cases have been managed.

9.6 Supporting Learners involved in bullying is a key part of our work in tackling bullying; we must move beyond simply disciplining learners who bully so whenever possible we deal with incidents using a 'Restorative Justice' approach.

Staff dealing with bullying incidents need to consider how to support learners who bully change their behaviour, how to help the victims of bullying to cope better next time or to avoid being bullied altogether and how to support potential targets of bullying.

In the event of bullying, targets/victims and those who have witnessed bullying will be offered the following support:

- emotional support and reassurance from the school counsellor;
- reassurance that it was right to report the incident, and that appropriate action will be taken;
- liaison with their parents/carers to ensure a continuous dialogue of support;
- advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff;
- advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online;
- discussion with their parent/carer on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents).

When bullying occurs will carefully consider whether it is appropriate to split up the target(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g., preventing them sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary. Learners who have been bullied will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups wherever possible. Staff, particularly pastoral staff, will work with the target to build resilience.

We acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators may be required to attend counselling sessions to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. We will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional well-being problems.

9.7 Follow up support is another key strand of our approach. The progress of the perpetrator, their target and any witnesses affected by the incident is monitored by their Heads of House, and one-on-one sessions to discuss how they are progressing may be necessary. If appropriate, follow-up correspondence will be arranged with parents one month after the incident.

Learners who have been bullied will be offered continuous support until the Head of House and target are confident the bullying has stopped. The target will be encouraged to tell a

trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated. Learners who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- receiving a consequence/sanction 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/carers and/or any external agencies.

Learners who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and their Head of House will, if necessary, refer them to external agencies for support e.g., CAMHS. In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the learner cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the school will work with parents/carers and any external agencies to offer an alternative means of accessing their education/provision.

10 Monitoring arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually by the pastoral team with the headteacher. After each review it will be shared with the local governing committee.

UNICEF - UNCRC

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child sets out human rights of every person under 18 (Article 1) and applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background (Article 2). Articles directly relating to this policy are:

3 (Best interests of the child)	16 (Right to privacy)
12 (Respect the views of the child)	19 (Protection from violence, abuse & neglect)
13 (Freedom of expression)	23 (Children with a disability)
14 (Freedom of thought, belief and religion)	28 (Right to education)
15 (Freedom of association)	31 (Leisure, play & culture)

Appendix 1: Advice to Learners

Bullying IS	Bullying is NOT:
- deliberately hurtful behaviour; - repeated over a period of time; - difficult for those being bullied to defend against.	- being friendly one day and squabbling the next; - when two learners of equal power and strength have a quarrel or one-off fight.

If you are ever being bullied:	After you have been bullied:
- do not suffer in silence; - be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop ('broken record' technique); - get away from the situation as quickly as possible; - tell an adult what has happened straight away; - try to ensure that you are always with a friend.	- tell a member of staff immediately; - tell your family; - if you are scared to tell a member of staff or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you; - keep on speaking up until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying; - do not blame yourself for what has happened.

When you are talking about bullying with an adult, be clear about:

- what has happened to you;
- how often it has happened;
- who was involved;
- who saw what was happening;
- where it happened;
- what you have done about it already.

If you find it hard to talk to anyone at school or home, you can contact:

- ChildLine - 0800 1111 (Freephone); - Bullying UK – www.bullying.co.uk; - Kidscape - www.kidscape.org.uk; - National Bullying Helpline - www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk	- NSPCC – 0808 800 5000; - Samaritans – 116 123 (Freephone); - Anti-bullying Alliance - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk; - Kooth - Home - Kooth
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If you witness bullying:	If you are bullying someone:
- do not ignore what happens; - let the person who is being bullied know that you have witnessed what is going on and that you are concerned; - encourage them to tell someone; - if it is in school and you are worried about it, REPORT it. If you are worried about putting yourself at risk, ask to speak to someone in confidence or write them a note about what happened; - adults are often the last to know that bullying is going on. If they are going to do something about it, they need to know what is happening.	- you have a choice – you may have bullied others in the past but that does not mean you have to keep doing it; - people who are bullied can feel scared and upset. Put a stop to that by changing your behaviour; - you can get into trouble if you keep bullying others – you might be excluded or reported to the police; - sometimes things happen to you to make you more likely to bully others. It is important to get help for yourself rather than taking your frustrations out on others.

Appendix 2: Advice to Parents/Carers

Bullying IS

- deliberately hurtful behaviour;
- repeated over a period of time;
- difficult for those being bullied to defend against.

Bullying is NOT:

- being friendly one day and squabbling the next;
- when two learners of equal power and strength have a quarrel or one-off fight.

What are the common symptoms I should look for?

If your child:

• changes their usual routine, behaviour and/or attitude (incl. at home) - moodiness and irritability; unusually aggressive, short-tempered or disruptive; lack of eye contact; depression; reluctant to socialise; becoming withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence and a reluctance to explain why; becomes clingy; asks for or steals money; • bullies other children or siblings; • appear continually tired (perhaps due to disturbed/lack of sleep induced by worry); • repeatedly saying they feel ill especially in the mornings: e.g. headaches, stomach aches; • complaints of hunger (possibly indicating that dinner money is being taken); • lack of appetite or stops eating; • attempts, threatens, talks about suicide; • threats of or actual self-harm;	• goes missing from home; • unwillingness to attend school; • deterioration in attendance/truancy/school refusal; • changing routes to and from school - not wanting to travel on the school bus; frightened walking to and from school; • frequent injuries (e.g., unexplained cuts and bruises); • items of clothing, personal property and/or schoolwork that are damaged or lost more often than considered normal; • money/possessions going missing; • slowing/sudden deterioration of, or disinterest in schoolwork/educational attainment; • unwillingness or afraid to use internet or mobile phone, becoming nervous and jumpy if a cyber message is received.
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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.

It can be helpful to ask questions about progress and friends at school; how break times and lunchtimes are spent/ and whether your child is facing problems or difficulties at school. Do not dismiss negative signs

What should I do if I suspect my child is being bullied?

- calmly talk with your child about their experience;
 - make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened;
 - reassure your child that they have done the right thing to tell you about the bullying;
 - explain to your child that should any further incidents occur, they should report them to a member of staff immediately;
 - inform school immediately (even if you are unsure). Ask to talk to your child's class teacher or Head of House.
- 🌈 try and stay calm – bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident;

- be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened – give dates, places and names of other children involved;
 - make a note of what action the school intends to take;
 - ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school;
 - stay in touch with the school; let the school know if things improve as well as if problems continue.
- follow the advice for learner support (see appendix 1);
 - keep any text messages your child receives, as “cyber” bullying is as hurtful as other forms. Also take screen shots of online bullying;
 - talk to the school about strategies that will help your child and provide him/her with support both inside and outside school;
 - if the problems persist outside school, please note that we have no authority to deal with these situations and the police should be involved.

How do I support my child if they are the target of bullying?

- once you are sure that bullying is happening reassure your child that they are not to blame – it is not their fault;
- encourage your child to talk to someone, preferably an adult, in school that they trust/like;
- talk about where it happens and work out simple ways to avoid those locations / situations. This is not always possible so advise your child to make sure there are other people around who they trust e.g., friends, peers, adults.
- advise them not to “buy off” the bully in any way;
- work out a plan of action with your child and a member of staff. Make sure that this is always followed;
- take an interest in your child’s social life. Encourage friendships, discuss their day including what they did at break or lunchtime and remember their journey to and from school;
- do not encourage or advise your child to retaliate or hit back – this may be out of their nature anyway and usually escalates an already emotionally challenging situation.

What to do if you think your concerns are not being addressed.

- ask for a copy of the school’s anti-bullying policy and check to see if agreed procedures are being followed;
- then contact the school and ask for an appointment to discuss matters with your child’s Pastoral Manager or if that does not resolve the issues, a member of the core leadership team;

Sources of additional advice and support:

• ChildLine - 0800 1111 (Freephone); • Bullying UK – www.bullying.co.uk; • Kidscape - www.kidscape.org.uk; • National Bullying Helpline - www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk	• NSPCC – 0808 800 5000; • Samaritans – 116 123 (Freephone); • Anti-bullying Alliance - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk;
• Preventing and tackling bullying – pages 16 → 19 contain links to specialist organisations. Preventing and tackling bullying • Cyberbullying Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (publishing.service.gov.uk)	

Together we can deal with it successfully. Remember, the target needs support but so too does the perpetrator. Finally – you have not failed as a parent if your child becomes the target of bullying. What is important is your, and our, response to the situation.

Appendix 3: Guidance for Staff

In dealing with learners who have allegedly been bullying, there are three positive aims:

- to stop the bullying behaviour, immediately;
- to re-educate the learners' attitudes and behaviour for the future;
- to reconcile the learners involved, if possible.

The aim should be to foster and maintain a good relationship with parents/carers in both the short- and long-term. Points for consideration when talking to parents/carers of:

Any children involved, in any role, in bullying:

- Who should talk with the parent(s)/carer(s)? Normally this is the member of staff dealing with those involved;
- Where to talk? Choose an office where the discussion can take place uninterrupted;
- What attitude/approach should be taken? Staff must remain objective; avoid anecdotal 'evidence.' Staff are de facto in loco parentis for all those involved;
- Choice of language taking care not to label the child;
- Do not make it personal - condemn the behaviour not the child;
- How to explain the school's position? What to do in case of a threat of violence? The school will not tolerate bullying. Violence is a serious breach of conduct and will be punished accordingly.

A child who is, allegedly, being bullied

- Allow the parent(s)/carer(s) to express their feelings, uninterrupted;
- Accept those feelings (they are real for that parent, even if they might seem excessive to you). Useful phrases include: "I realise you're upset," "I'll try to help," "This must be difficult for you." Avoid: "I know how you feel,"
- Assure the parent(s)/carer(s) that you are pleased they have taken the time to see you;
- Express the view that bullying is unacceptable, and that you intend to act positively;
- Ask them to keep in touch with you.

A child who has, allegedly, been bullying

- Avoid labelling their child 'a bully.' Begin by offering some positive view/aspect of their child, which you appreciate and value;
- Show a shared concern for their child's problem (antisocial bullying behaviour) and a concern to help that child fulfil his/her best potential. Useful phrases include: "I am sure we both share a concern for ...'s future." "We need to help him/her to show his/her best side/develop his/her potential and talents, avoid spoiling him/herself with this sort of behaviour;"
- Ask if anything could be upsetting/stressing the child, now or recently, to trigger the bullying behaviour;
- Get the parent(s)/carer(s) to agree, if possible, that bullying the child who bullies will not be a positive approach to take;
- Explain what you intend to do next; get their agreement, if possible. Promise to (and do) keep in touch with them.

NB: It is always best if all parents/carers are made aware of our approach to bullying (both in writing and at meetings, formally and informally) and are encouraged to share our positive approach, i.e., aiming to stop the bullying behaviour.

It is our policy to inform and involve parents/carers in all incidents of bullying.

[Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Preventing and tackling bullying \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)