



Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

Tonacliffe Primary School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment regardless of their gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, ability/disability, socioeconomic status or any other protected characteristic; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour (see the definition of bullying below). This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying. These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school. The measures laid down in this policy (and the sanctions to be implemented if needed) are part of the school's Positive Behaviour Policy and are communicated to all pupils, staff and parents. They work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at Tonacliffe Primary School.

Legal Framework

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

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Definitions

Bullying can be described as being persistent deliberate acts done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully.

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- **Repeated.** Incidents are not one offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intended** to hurt someone physically, emotionally or verbally. It is not accidental.
- **Targeted** and often aimed at certain groups due to their protected characteristics, for example because of race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or socioeconomic status.
- **A power imbalance.** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs 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.

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault (A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.)
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- emotional (A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities.)
- damage to property or theft (Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hand over property to them.)
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Types of bullying can include:

- **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- **Homophobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- **Sexist bullying:** 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.

- Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
- Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.
- Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Cyberbullying:

The school has an Online Safety Policy in place, which outlines the school's zero-tolerance approach to cyber bullying. The school views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' 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. If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the headteacher will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Tonacliffe Primary School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils 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.

Tonacliffe Primary School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our antibullying/behaviour policy.

Signs of Bullying

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Asking to be driven to school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions

- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the pupil becoming aggravated
- They have been the victim of domestic abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

The Headteacher:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a Bullying Report Form on CPOMS of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

SLT:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents, when more serious bullying incidents occur.

Teachers:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.

- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the pupil's key stage leader (and the community cohesion lead if they suspect bullying is targeted due to a protected characteristic) of such observations.
- Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.

All Staff:

- The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.
- Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- Staff act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident.
- Staff always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern.
- If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Parents:

Parents have an important part to play in supporting our anti-bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in your children – for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their usual standard.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- If you suspect a child has bullied your child please inform school immediately. Do not approach that child or family in or out of school.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.

Pupils:

- Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own. Tell an adult immediately. Teachers will deal with the bully.
- If incidents of bullying occur to yourself:
 - Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
 - Generally it is best to tell any adult you trust straight away, either at home or school. You will get immediate support.
 - Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.
 - Be assertive – shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.

- Fighting back may make things worse.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.

Prevention and Strategies for Dealing with Bullying

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision. They will do this by:

- Clearly communicating a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which is regularly promoted across the whole school.
- All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.
- Different types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum.
- Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- All members of the school are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- A safe place, supervised by a teacher, is available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone.
- The teacher supervising the area will speak to pupils to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.
- Teachers will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.
- The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the bullying situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

If bullying is suspected school will:

- Talk to the suspected victim, and any witnesses, separately.
- Identify the bully and talk about what has happened, to discover why they became involved. This must be separate to the victim and witnesses and staff must ensure there is no possibility of contact, including electronic communication.
- A room is used that allows privacy.

- A witness is used for serious incidents.
- Make it clear to all that bullying is not tolerated at Tonacliffe Primary School.
- Premature assumptions are not made and no judgements are made.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete.
- All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interviews / situation with other pupils.
- Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic, sexual, etc bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.
- If the bully owns up then sanctions procedures outlined in the Behaviour Policy will be followed.
- If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- Incidents of bullying are recorded as such in the Bullying Incident Log on CPOMs.
- If the suspected bully does not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure.
- Continue monitoring the situation to ensure no repetition.
- Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- If possible, the headteacher will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.
- A member of SLT holds a formal meeting, on a monthly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped – these formal meetings will continue to take place once a month until the member of SLT and victim are confident the bullying has stopped.
- The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- The victim is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school club or activity.
- The school will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.
- The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.
- The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored by their teachers.
- In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the pupil cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the headteacher and DSL will look to transfer the pupil to another mainstream school.

Bullying Outside School

Headteachers and teachers have the legal power to make sure pupils behave outside of school premises (state schools only) and to discipline them for poor behaviour. This includes bullying that happens anywhere off the school premises, for example on public transport or in a town centre. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere

when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip. School staff can also choose to report bullying to the police or local council.

Revised and reviewed August 2026

APPENDIX

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ukcouncil-for-internet-safety
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/at-risk-groups/sen-disability 10 theeducationpeople.org
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Race, Religion and Nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBTQ+

- Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying

- NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline: 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaignposters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/toolsinformation/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying/investigating-and-respondingsexual>
- Childnet Project DeShame (Online Sexual Harassment and Bullying): www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-deshame