Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Poplar Avenue, Ripley, DE5 3PN
Tel: 01773 742281

Date Reviewed / Adopted	Minute No.	Amendments Made	Next Review Date
June 2026			June 2027

1. Statement of Intent

At Ripley Junior School, we are committed to ensuring all children feel safe, valued and included. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will be addressed promptly and effectively. Our approach is grounded in our core school values of Ready, Respectful and Safe. This means that we expect children to be prepared to learn and take responsibility for their actions, to treat others with kindness, empathy and fairness, and to ensure that their actions help everyone feel both physically and emotionally secure. We adopt a restorative approach to behaviour which focuses on building and repairing relationships, developing an understanding of the impact of behaviour, promoting accountability and supporting long-term positive change. As a result, bullying is addressed through support, education and restoration rather than relying solely on consequences.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the school actively works to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between all members of the school community. Particular consideration is given to pupils who may be more vulnerable to bullying, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, those with protected characteristics and those who may experience disadvantage.

1. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy reflects current legislation including:
• Education and Inspections Act 2006
• Equality Act 2010
• Children Act 1989 and 2004
• Protection from Harassment Act 1997
• Malicious Communications Act 1988
• Communications Act 2003
• Human Rights Act 1998
• Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

It is informed by statutory guidance such as:
• Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
• Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
• Department for Education guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying
• Behaviour in Schools (2022)
• Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges

This policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Inclusion/SEND Policy and Complaints Policy.

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group and involves an imbalance of power. At Ripley Junior School, children are taught to understand bullying through the STOP principle, meaning "Several Times On Purpose", which helps them to distinguish bullying from one-off incidents or conflict.

3. Safeguarding Context

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), bullying may constitute a form of child-on-child abuse and may indicate wider safeguarding concerns. Where appropriate, concerns will be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All incidents are taken seriously, recorded on Arbor and/or MyConcern, and reviewed to identify patterns, trends or vulnerability. Records include details of the incident, actions taken and outcomes, and are reviewed regularly by senior leaders and the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with safeguarding procedures. In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), the school works closely with families and external agencies, provides early help where needed and ensures that all actions are taken in the best interests of the child.

4. Types of Bullying

Bullying may present in a range of forms including verbal, physical, emotional and online behaviours, including cyberbullying. It may also include prejudice-based bullying linked to race or religion, disability or special educational needs, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. Such incidents may also be treated as safeguarding concerns where appropriate.

5. Prevention Through Culture and Values

The prevention of bullying is embedded within the school's culture and values. Through being Ready, children are supported to regulate their behaviour and engage positively with learning. Through being Respectful, they are encouraged to demonstrate empathy, kindness and inclusion in their interactions with others. Through being Safe, they experience predictable and supportive environments that promote both physical and emotional security. This culture is reinforced through the planned curriculum, including PSHE and RSHE, online safety education and a strong focus on diversity and inclusion. Positive relationships between staff and pupils, early intervention when issues arise and consistent language across the school all contribute to preventing bullying. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the development and review of the school's approach through pupil voice, such as the school council or Well-being Ambassadors.

6. Restorative Approach to Bullying

Our approach to bullying prioritises repairing harm and rebuilding relationships. Staff use restorative practices to guide pupils through reflection, helping them to understand what has happened, consider their thoughts and feelings, recognise who has been affected and identify how the situation can be put right. The focus is on accountability, reflection and restoring relationships so that pupils can be successfully reintegrated into the school community. Pupils who have experienced bullying are never required to take part in restorative processes unless they feel safe and supported to do so.

7. Procedures for Responding

When a concern is raised, staff will respond immediately by listening carefully, offering reassurance, taking the concern seriously and ensuring the safety of all pupils involved. Pupils are encouraged to report concerns to any trusted adult, and parents and carers can contact the school directly.

An appropriate investigation will follow, during which staff will speak to all parties separately, gather and record information carefully and avoid making assumptions. A safeguarding review will then take place to consider whether the behaviour meets safeguarding thresholds and whether it should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Following this, appropriate action will be taken, which may include restorative conversations or meetings, proportionate consequences in line with the Behaviour Policy, and the implementation of support plans. All incidents are recorded, monitored and reviewed to identify any patterns or trends.

8. Outcomes and Consequences

In line with the school's Behaviour Policy, responses to bullying may include restorative meetings, reflection activities, loss of privileges, increased supervision and meetings with parents. Where necessary, disciplinary sanctions will be applied to ensure the safety of pupils and to reinforce clear expectations. All responses are proportionate and focused on helping pupils learn from their behaviour and repair relationships.

9. Support

Support is provided for both the child affected by bullying and the child displaying bullying behaviour. Children who have experienced bullying are offered immediate reassurance, access to a trusted adult, regular check-ins and, where appropriate, wider pastoral support. Children who have displayed bullying behaviour are supported through guided reflection, education around the impact of their actions, behaviour support strategies and opportunities to repair harm through restorative processes.

10. Online Bullying

Online bullying is taken as seriously as bullying that occurs in person. The school will take appropriate steps to work with parents, report concerns where necessary and apply safeguarding procedures where required.

11. Bullying Beyond the School Day

The school recognises its responsibility to respond to bullying that occurs beyond the school day, including incidents that take place on the way to and from school, online or within the community. This is supported by the powers set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy, monitoring trends and ensuring that staff receive appropriate training. The Designated Safeguarding Lead oversees safeguarding aspects of bullying and provides guidance on more serious cases. All staff are expected to act promptly when concerns arise, use restorative approaches and record information accurately. All staff receive regular safeguarding and behaviour training, including recognising and responding to bullying. Pupils are encouraged to speak out, support one another and engage positively in restorative processes. Parents are expected to work in partnership with

the school to support consistent expectations and outcomes. Governors provide strategic oversight and monitor the effectiveness of the school's approach through regular review.

13. Monitoring and Review

Bullying incidents are reviewed regularly by senior leaders and class teachers, with trends analysed carefully, including consideration of vulnerable groups. This policy is reviewed annually to ensure that it remains up to date, effective and aligned with current guidance and the needs of the school community. Feedback from pupils, staff and parents is used to inform ongoing development. Parents and carers who have concerns about how bullying has been addressed are encouraged to follow the school's Complaints Policy.