Yorke Mead Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2026

Our School Vision Statement

BRINGING LEARNING to LIFE

We are a school dedicated to creating an environment where children are able to grow into happy, well-rounded individuals with a love of learning through which they can achieve to the best of their abilities.

We want our pupils to enter the wider world as

- *Happy, positive individuals*
- *Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution*
- *Confident, resilient, healthy & life-long learners.*

DARE TO…

D - Determination

A - Ambition

R - Resilience

E – Enjoyment

T - Trust

O - Openness

What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, generally repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Although generally repeated, bullying can also be a one off, deliberate event.
Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might also be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools need to make their own judgements about each specific case. Bullying at school can be therefore perpetrated by those who not only seek to use physical strength to dominate others but apply social skills to either directly or indirectly dominate others through non-physical means.

Bullying in Schools Briefing Paper 2020

Background

Anti-bullying is part of the of the school's overall approach to creating a positive environment for learning as set out in full in our Behaviour for Learning Policy and is part of our safeguarding work.
The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to prevent discrimination on grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief.
Guidance is given by the Department of Education (DfE) in 'Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for Head teachers, staff and governing bodies' (July 2017). It also takes into account the research done by OFSTED in 'No place for bullying: how schools create a positive culture and prevent and tackle bullying' (June 2012). These documents can be accessed on the DfE and OFSTED websites. Additional guidance can be consulted on the websites of Herts for Learning and of relevant charities such as the Anti-Bullying Alliance and Childnet International.

Our Key Principles

- Everyone – parents, staff and children – is responsible for stopping and preventing bullying.
- We should all treat each other with respect and kindness. The school has three simple rules: *Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Responsible*
- We do not tolerate bullying of any kind.
- Any incident of bullying is recorded and investigated. It is recorded as confirmed bullying after the investigation is completed. Any incidents of confirmed bullying (for victim and perpetrator) is recorded on the pupils' individual CPOMs records.
- Action is taken to support children and ensure bullying does not reoccur.
- Although bullying is generally a repeated action, it can be a one-off incident if the perpetrators understand their actions are causing distress.

- Bullying can also involve deliberately excluding a person or group of people from a group – leaving someone out (social exclusion)

Types of Bullying

There are three types of bullying:

Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things.
Verbal bullying includes:

- Teasing
- Name-calling
- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Taunting
- Threatening to cause harm
- Making derogatory comments about another child or their family

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships.
Social bullying includes:

- Leaving someone out on purpose
- Telling other children not to be friends with someone
- Spreading rumours about someone
- Embarrassing someone in public
- Throwing someone out of group chats on social media

Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions.
Physical bullying includes:

- Hitting/kicking/pinching
- Spitting
- Tripping/pushing
- Taking or breaking someone's things
- Making mean or rude hand gestures

Where and When Bullying Happens

Bullying can occur during or after school hours. While most reported bullying happens in the school building, a significant percentage also happens in places like on the playground, it can also happen travelling to or from school, in the children's neighbourhood, or on the Internet. With the growth in children having access to social media, there is now an increase in bullying on these platforms.

Prevention

A school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. We believe that best practice involves staff proactively being aware and conscious of issues between pupils which might provoke or conflict, and to develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

This might involve talking to specific pupils or groups of children or more general discussions about issues of difference, in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies.

Our key work in preventing and tackling bullying is driven through our ethos of positive behaviour, where

pupils and staff treat one another with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.

Our Anti bullying Approach includes ensuring:

- Everyone (children, staff and parents) understands what bullying is and that the school does not tolerate bullying.
- All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
  We make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that children feel assured that they will be listened to, and incidents acted on, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.
- Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying. Our work to prevent bullying is not limited to what happens inside school – we will work to ensure children are safe from bullying at all times – and will liaise with other organisations in order to achieve this.
- Staff are aware of the severe impact bullying can have on a child's social, emotional and mental health, and should ensure appropriate provision is made to support the child emotionally and in their learning.
- We create an inclusive environment. Children are taught to respect and value all groups of people and that our individual differences are actually what make us special.
- We understand that some pupils are more vulnerable to bullying than others. Through our PSHE and other curriculum-based work we openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. We are also conscious of children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. Our work focuses on teaching children that use of any prejudice-based language is unacceptable. We believe celebrating successes is an important part of achieving this.
- Parents are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. We want all parents to feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. This includes parents reinforcing the value of positive behaviour at home
- The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Our work is regularly evaluated and updated to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers
- We work with the wider community such as anti-bullying organisations, the police and children's services to agree a clearly understood approach to cases where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.
- In any incident of bullying both the victim and the perpetrator need support.
- When any case of bullying is confirmed the parents of both victim and perpetrator are contacted and the issues made clear to them. It is hoped they will work with school to support positive steps to prevent further bullying.

Cyber Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread availability of technology opens up the risk of bullying through the use of social media and electronic means of communication. Such cyber-bullying can occur in or outside school and may be aimed at pupils, parents/carers and/or staff.

Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. The school is committed

to eradicating such behaviour and seeks the support of everyone in the school community to encourage the responsible use of electronic devices.

To prevent such behaviour, and to enable children to protect themselves or to report any form of bullying they may experience, children are educated specifically in what contributes appropriate use of the internet and mobile devices. They know that they can seek support in school for any incidents. Parents are informed of incidents occurring outside school and advised to keep screenshots.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, 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 that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

For more information on how to respond to cyber-bullying please refer to the 'further resources' section of the DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying Guidance for Schools July 2017.

Child on Child Abuse (formally referred to as Peer on Peer)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) ensures staff are aware that children can abuse other children (previously referred to as peer on peer abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

To prevent child on child abuse, it is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are in reality abusive in nature. KCSiE makes it clear how downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing behaviours as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise
- causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);

- sexual harassment, as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse. This includes upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing, or sharing images with the intention of causing the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. In the younger years this is likely to include inappropriately aiming to grab or kick each other in the genital regions, or purposefully smacking bottoms.
  and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

It is important that everyone understands that behaviours in primary school may be the early stages of child on child abuse, and that the culture of behaviours that can become abusive may have seeds developing within the primary years. A key element of our work in primary school lies in helping children understand the importance of **consent** and that every child has the right to say 'no' to behaviours they feel uncomfortable with.

Our Responsibilities

Pupils

- Behave in a respectful and kind manner to others at all times; encourage your peers to do the same.
- Make sure you understand what bullying is: if you have any questions, ask a member of staff.
- Report any bullying you believe to be happening, whether directed at you or someone else, to a member of staff.
- Help staff in their efforts to prevent bullying, and to investigate and resolve any incidents that occur.

Parents and carers

- Explain to children how positive behaviour makes life better for everybody and that bullying, in any form, is wrong.
- Show support for our school's efforts to eradicate bullying and follow the home school agreement signed when your child joined the school.
- Report any evidence of bullying to a member of staff at the school.
- Assist senior leaders in investigating and resolving any bullying incidents.

Staff

- Ensure that pupils understand what bullying is and what they should do if they encounter it.
- Make sure the needs of vulnerable pupils and groups are taken into account.
- Take all reports of bullying seriously, inform the SLT and record any incidents they investigate.
- Investigate bullying incidents and record them; take action to ensure they do not reoccur, providing appropriate feedback to pupils involved and their parents.
- Provide support to those who suffer bullying and help develop their resilience. Ensure the pastoral team have been made aware of any issues and that the support for both victim and perpetrator is in place to understand why their behaviour is wrong and to encourage positive change in their behaviour.
- Be conscious of any type of inappropriate behaviour, make a record and look to see if there is a pattern or repeated behaviour towards any one or group of pupils.

Headteacher and Senior Leadership

- Ensure staff are trained and motivated to promote positive behaviour and pupils' understanding of why bullying is wrong.
- Establish procedures for dealing with bullying incidents and provide leadership in resolving them, drawing in external services if needed.
- Keep records dealing with bullying incidents and provide an annual report to governors.
- Ensure any proved incidents of bullying are recorded on CPOMS – maintain vigilance for any repeated behaviours or patterns of behaviours
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of diversity within the school community to reduce bullying through the effective teaching of fundamental British Values.
- Provide awareness of the importance of this policy and anti-bullying throughout the school community.

Governors

- Review this policy annually based on experience of its operation
- Confirm the school's implementation of the policy is consistent with the anti-discrimination provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and good practice set out in national and local guidance
- Ensure the school has appropriate procedures in place to deal with complaints

The Governor responsible for anti-bullying is David North and Simon Galloway.

Support for staff who are bullied and harassed

It is important that schools take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils. But it is equally important that schools make it clear that bullying or harassment of staff, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, is unacceptable. At Yorke Mead this is covered in our Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedures document.