

Anti Bullying Policy

Statement of intent

Ash Lea School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment. This means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. 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 inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Positive Behaviour Policy and Physical Intervention Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents, carers and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school.

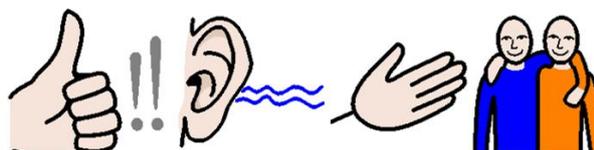
Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance 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
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2022) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Positive Behaviour Support and Physical Intervention Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy
- Exclusion Policy



Definitions

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.

Bullying 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.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils.
- Pupils with SEND.

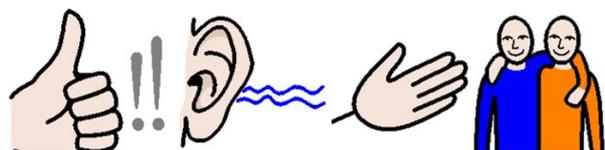
Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Racist bullying: 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.
Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person’s gender identity or gender presentation, 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 or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person’s disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual’s disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual’s disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

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

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

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

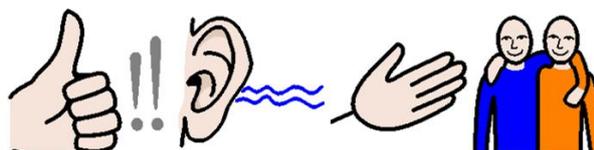
Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring 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.
- 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.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy alongside the Wellbeing Lead, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a record of all reported incidents (on Behaviourwatch), 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.



Teachers are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents or carers where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents/carers when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- 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.
- Refraining from 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 (on Behaviourwatch) once they have been approached by a pupil for support.
- Supporting pupils with understanding what bullying is, and promoting the schools anti bullying culture.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Informing their child's teacher if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Following the school's values and school rules.
- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not becoming involved in any bullying.

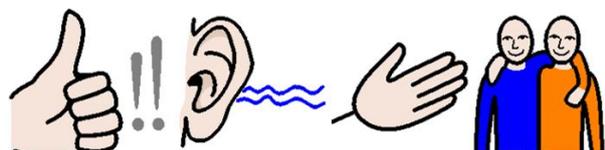
Everyone is responsible for:

- Making sure a pupil is always believed.
- Ensuring bullying is never passed off as banter or "just part of growing up".

Prevention

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which will be regularly promoted across the whole school (the school code). All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the relationships and health education curriculum, in line with the Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy.

Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.



The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

The school will implement class ambassadors, the student council and other projects to promote positive relationships and anti-bullying initiatives.

Peer-on-peer abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider social factors that can influence behaviour, where appropriate the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. Information on the school's approach to preventing and managing instances of peer-on-peer abuse can be found within this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying 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 pupils, 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.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

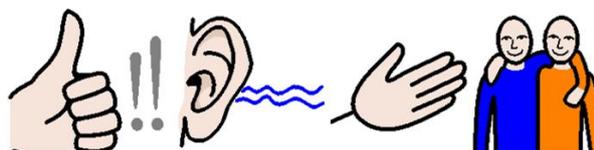
- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying. The pupil will always be believed, and any reports or witnesses to cyberbullying will never be passed off as banter or part of growing up.

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone



- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away

Parents will be advised to report to the headteacher if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.

Procedures

The exact course of action will vary but the main objectives should be that bullying incidents are identified, brought into the open, recorded, discussed and that strategies are agreed to help resolve the problem. In all incidents of bullying observed, disclosed or suspected, it is important to ensure that:

- It is clear that the bully's behaviour is unacceptable and the bullying must stop.
- The victim is assured that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Everything that happens is carefully recorded by the class teacher or a member of SLT.
- Any parental concerns are referred to the member of the SLT supporting the class.
- Situations not satisfactorily resolved in the view of the SLT member, parent or any concerned member of staff will be referred to the Head Teacher or a governor (Chris Hankinson: Safeguarding Governor), if appropriate.
- Any bullying between adults is reported to an appropriate person. This may be the Head Teacher, a member of the SLT or a governor.

Additionally, those involved will need to discuss and agree on:

- What support is needed or available for the bully to help change his/her behaviour.
- What support is needed or available to help the victim to learn coping strategies.
- If the behaviours are on-going and whether it would be helpful to work with the parents of both victim and bully.
- Working together to discover the motives behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. If this is the case, schools should consider whether the perpetrator would benefit from support too.

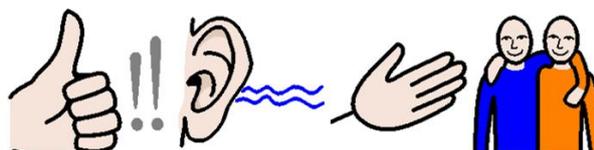
Intervention:

- Ash Lea will ensure the correct disciplinary measures are implemented for perpetrators to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong.
- Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking into account a pupils needs and level of understanding.
- Where bullying occurs towards staff, it's equally important that SLT and/or Governors (if required) intervene correctly. Ash Lea School community should understand that bullying, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Support

In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from staff.
- 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.
- Invention support i.e. 1:1 sessions with the ELSA, referral to external service e.g. CAMHS.
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents/carers to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online.
- Discussion with their parent/carers 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).

Pupils who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour.
- Appropriate assistance from parents.
- Support through PSHE, RSE and or other intervention sessions.

Record keeping

The DSL will ensure that robust records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The headteacher and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed every two years L. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Reviewed by: Luke Skillington (Assistant Headteacher)
Date: 10th May 2023
Next Review Date: 10th May 2025

