

# Anti-Bullying Policy



**Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy:**

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**Named Governor with lead responsibility:** Mr M O'Dowd

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Next Review Date: Nov 2026

# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

## **Legal framework**

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

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986.

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

- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Relational Inclusion & Behaviour Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## **Aims**

The aims of this Policy are:

- To produce a safe and secure environment where all children can learn
- To produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur
- To make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school
- To make clear our definitions of bullying

## **Our definition of bullying**

'Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves.' DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying'.

Bullying involves behaviour that is either physically or emotionally harmful, such as:

- Physical bullying – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal bullying – name calling, insulting, threatening

- Indirect bullying – spreading nasty stories, excluding someone from social groups
- Cyber-bullying – threatening by messaging or texts, misuse of a camera or video facilities, through gaming, websites or social media sites and apps

Bullying is harmful for all involved: not just the person who is bullied, but also to those who stand by. Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, feign illness or take unusual absences.

Bullying is recognised by Gorse Hall Primary School as being a form of child on child abuse; children can abuse other children.

- Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.
- We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

Vulnerable pupils 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 pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who are adopted
- Pupils suffering from a health problem
- Pupils with caring responsibilities
- Pupils from ethnic minorities
- Pupils entitled to Free School Meals
- Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language
- Pupils who are perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual

## **Types of bullying**

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything.

Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

**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 & biphobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation(s).

**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.

### **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.

Gorse Hall 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.

Gorse Hall School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **Anti-bullying practice**

At Gorse Hall School we believe that there are two main elements to effective anti-bullying practice:

1. Preventing bullying incidents
2. Responding to bullying incidents

Punishing bullies does not end bullying. At Gorse Hall School we stress that it is the bullying behaviour, rather than the person doing the bullying, that is not liked or acceptable. We positively encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences and to take action to end bullying and provide support for bullied pupils.

### **Our stance on bullying is that:**

1. The school will not tolerate bullying.
2. Everyone connected with our school, in any capacity, will value each child and respect their differences.
3. Co-operative play will be encouraged but we also understand the need for children to have quieter reflective time should they wish it.
4. Anyone witnessing bullying should tell a member of staff.

5. All incidents of racist abuse must be corrected and the Headteacher informed. Racist incidents will be logged appropriately.

6. Members of staff will listen to children's or parent's worries or concerns.

Bullying consists of any action or comment which is hurtful to others and it must **STOP (Several Times On Purpose)**. We aim to provide a preventative curriculum that will uncover bullying and provide support to the victims. This will be done through a variety of teaching methods:

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of the Headteacher**

It is the role of the Headteacher to:

- Review and amend this policy, account for new legislation and government guidance, and use staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Implement the school Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.
- Ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school.
- Ensure that all staff receive sufficient training to be able to implement this policy.
- Set a school climate of mutual support and praise for success.
- Keep accurate and up to date records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.
- Assemblies throughout the year will positively address friendship issues promoting anti-bullying.

### **The role of the Governing Body**

It is the role of the Governing Body to:

- Evaluate and review this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Support the Headteacher to eliminate bullying.
- Analyse and monitor the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.

### **The role of the Class Teacher and Non-Teaching Staff**

It is the role of the all adults in school to:

- Plan and deliver circle times which play a vital role in helping children to address specific problems and can be good for discussing bullying and the way it affects behaviour and self-esteem.
- Drama and role-play can be used to explore bullying and anti-bullying themes. Through this medium, children can begin to empathise with victims and identify bullying tendencies in themselves and others.

- Anti-bullying is a cross-curricular theme and as such can be incorporated into many subjects, e.g. story time, RE, writing workshops, PHSE, history etc., whenever it is appropriate.
- Make themselves available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Provide follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Be alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the pupil's Class Teacher/Phase Leader of such observations.
- Refrain from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.
- Children who maybe LGBT have a trusted adult who they can be open with and safe spaces for discussions.

### **The role of the Parents**

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing their child's Phase Leader or Class 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.

### **The role of the Pupil**

Pupils are responsible for:

Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.

- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

## **Prevention**

### **1. Preventing bullying incidents**

The Behaviour Policy encourages the promotion of high self-esteem through the giving of rewards and certificates. Anyone can be a bully and can become a victim of bullying. Stories or role-play should reflect and address this, and teachers should ensure the appropriateness of any resources used. Children with disabilities or of ethnic minority descent can have low self-esteem as a result of feeling different. Our curriculum and assemblies will attempt to celebrate individuality as well as teamwork throughout the school year.

Bullying issues and how to handle them, are discussed in PSHE lessons, circle time and individually with children if appropriate. Co-operative play is encouraged and older children are encouraged to be role models to the younger children.

- Year 6 Children act as Play Leaders during lunch and playtimes.
- Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- Staff are on playground duty during lunch and playtimes to provide a safe, secure, active and easily supervised environment.
- Training is provided for ALL staff to help deal with behaviour and possible bullying incidents in an appropriate manner.
- Assemblies throughout the year will positively address friendship issues and promote anti-bullying.
- PHSE Jigsaw lessons play a vital role in helping children to address specific problems and can be good for discussing bullying and the way it affects behaviour and self-esteem.
- Guidance will be provided for teachers so that they can develop the confidence to tackle these difficult issues.
- Drama and role-play can be used to explore bullying and anti-bullying themes. Through this medium, children can begin to empathise with victims and identify bullying tendencies in themselves and others.
- Anti-bullying is a cross-curricular theme and as such can be incorporated into many subjects, e.g. story time, RE, writing workshops, PHSE, history etc., whenever it is appropriate.
- Teachers will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- Before a vulnerable pupil joins the school, the pupil's class teacher and the DSL will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening.
- 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.

### **Preventing child-on-child sexual abuse**

Gorse hall has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child sexual abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy outlines our stance on addressing child-on-child sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the new the SRE curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.

Teachers will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, SRE and group sessions. Such content will be age and stage of development specific, and tackle issues such as the following:

- Healthy relationships
- Respectful behaviour
- Gender roles, stereotyping and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Prejudiced behaviour

## **2. Responding to bullying incidents**

At Gorse Hall, we aim to identify where and when bullying occurs, and to deal with it as a matter of urgency. Anyone can, and should, report a bullying incident - whether a passer-by, a victim, or a bully. Children should approach their class teacher or other member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. If the matter is urgent, they should tell the first adult they meet. All staff will be willing and able to deal with any incident that is brought to their attention. If appropriate, a member of staff will handle the situation individually, or where necessary, report it to a senior member of staff. The DSL and SENCo will be informed of any allegations of bullying against pupils with SEND. They will record the incident in writing and, working with the SENCO, decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the pupil in mind at all times. The victim, the bully, and any witnesses will be interviewed separately to establish an accurate account of events. Written reports by those involved may be made. The aim of any intervention will be to stop the immediate abuse and to change the behaviour of the bully. The victim will be supported by both the member of staff and their peer group. The bully will be dealt with using the sanction that is most appropriate, given the nature of the incident and any previous involvement in similar offensive acts. The bully should also be given the opportunity to talk about the incident and explore their feelings as to why they need to act in such an anti-social manner. A period of monitoring will follow and if there are any further incidents relating to the same pupils, the Headteacher will investigate. In the event of a racist incident, all information is logged. This is routinely reported to the Governing Body.

### **Cyber Bullying**

The school has an E-Safety Policy in place, which outlines the school's zero-tolerance approach to cyber bullying. At Gorse Hall, we view 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. We encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screen shots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.

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. (We will access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the school's powers are used



proportionately and lawfully). 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.

## **Sanctions**

These include:

- Loss of responsibilities
- Loss of break time / lunch time
- Loss of Golden Time
- Behaviour plans and charts
- Ongoing monitoring
- Suspension
- Exclusion

Staff at Gorse Hall School, particularly the DSL, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy. Our school community realises that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend nurture sessions to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

## **Support for pupils who have been bullied**

Children who have been bullied or are vulnerable will be offered support through:

- Opportunities to talk and be listened to by a trusted member of staff. Pupils shall encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- Assertiveness training, helping them to use verbal and body language in a way that discourages bullying, including how to respond to bullying in a calm, controlled manner.
- Pupils shall be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime nurture sessions or an after-school club.
- School staff, particularly the DSL, will work with the pupil (including those with SEND) to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy through well-planned nurture groups.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, for example Tameside's Children's Services and Early Help if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this policy, our Online Safety Policy and the school behaviour policy. If required, the DSL will collaborate with DSLs at other settings.

## **Support for pupils who have bullied others**

Children who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a trusted member of Staff
- Being provided with an opportunity to say sorry and make amends
- Receiving a consequence 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

Pupils who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the DSL/SENCo will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CAMHs.

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.

Where a child has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the pupil who has been the victim of bullying, their parents, the Headteacher and DSL will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

### **Record Keeping**

All incidences of bullying are recorded on the school's Bullying Report Form.  
 All incidences of bullying are reported to the Governing Body through the Headteachers Report to the Governing Body.  
 All racist incidences are recorded on an internal log.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed annually in line in line with our cycle of Policy Review.  
 The effectiveness of this Policy is reported to the Governing Body through the Headteachers Report to Governors.

### **What can parents do to support our policy?**

We need to work together to support victims of bullying incidents. Try not to over react. Listen to your child calmly and try to work out the facts. Reassure your child that it is not happening because there is something wrong with them. We need to resolve any issues through school and home working together. Telling a bullied child to hit back seldom works. Likewise, 'stand up for yourself', 'walk away', 'laugh it off', or 'ignore it' may not be very helpful. If your child is involved in bullying either as a victim or a bully, he or she needs your confidence and understanding.

## Bullying Report Form

This form will be sent to the headteacher upon completion.

Personal details	
<b>Name of person reporting incident:</b>	
<b>Name of pupil(s) being bullied:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>	
<b>Year group:</b>	
<b>Form of bullying (verbal/physical/indirect/cyber):</b>	
<b>Form of bullying</b> (racist, religious, cultural, sexual, SEN/disability based, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, related to home circumstances etc):	
How may we contact you (please circle)?	
<b>At school</b>	<b>At home</b>
<b>Home address (if applicable):</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	

Incident details
What happened?
Where and when did the incident take place? How often does the bullying take place?
Who has been suspected of bullying?
Did anyone else see the incident?
According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?
Action(s) taken:
Follow up action(s) including dates:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_