



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Introduction

At Oakwood, we recognise the right of every child to learn in a safe and secure environment. We are determined to promote pro-social behaviour through our school values of **kindness, curiosity and ambition** and develop a school ethos where anti-social behaviour, including bullying behaviour, is regarded as unacceptable. We aim to develop an environment in which all members of the Oakwood school community are valued and are encouraged to treat everyone with **kindness** and respect. We aim to ensure all members of our community are **curious** about instances where bullying may be occurring and we are **ambitious** in our assertion that bullying is dealt with efficiently and effectively towards the complete eradication of bullying within our community.

We recognise that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

Bullying is recognised by Oakwood as being a form of peer-on-peer 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.

Oakwood Primary School's approach to anti-bullying and the contents of this policy are founded in the guidance provided in the legislation below, linked school policies and the information developed by the [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#).

Legislation linked to this policy:

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 2004
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986.

Statutory Guidance Linked to this Policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025
- Working together to Safeguard Children, 2023

This policy is closely linked with our:

- Behaviour Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- School Code of Conduct
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
- School's Vision, Aims and Values.
- Curriculum policies such as PSHE/RSE Policy
- SEND Policy

This permeates all aspects of school life, helping to reduce the incidence of bullying.

Definition of bullying

Oakwood Primary School has consulted both the DfE's Preventing and Tackling Bullying guidance and the Anti-Bullying Alliance to define bullying as:

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online."

Oakwood Primary School defines the term repetitive as three separate occasions where a behaviour or action has occurred within a reasonable timeframe. A reasonable timeframe may be the same academic year or calendar year. Teachers and school staff will use their professional judgment to determine if this threshold has been met.

Single incidents of verbal or physical attack and behaviour that is hurtful, but not intentional, will also be taken seriously and dealt with according to the principles outlined in our Behaviour Policy.

An imbalance of power is any situation where a person or group of people feel they have power of others. This may occur due to the size of a group, stature of the person in terms of size or age or it could be due to the SEND of another person meaning there are communication or understanding difficulties. This imbalance of power is then possibly used to negatively impact another person or group of people.

The anti-bullying lead at Oakwood Primary School is the Deputy Headteacher, Mr Stanway. He maintains oversight of the anti-bullying response in the school including the policy and reporting the Headteacher and Governors.

Different Forms and Types of Bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying/harassment
- Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying

Further Explanation of Types of Bullying:

Verbal Bullying

Repeatedly using words to hurt another person. For example, calling people names, shouting or swearing at a person.

Emotional bullying

Bullying that causes emotional hurt and can include isolating or excluding someone, spreading rumours or lies to humiliate someone, verbal aggression, threats and more.

Physical Bullying

Repeatedly using physical contact to upset, hurt or humiliate. This can include hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting, pinching, stealing or destroying property.

Indirect Bullying

Repeatedly doing or saying unkind things behind someone's back, or spreading rumours about a person. This can also include posting or sharing comments or photos online, on games or by text message (see cyber-bullying).

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual bullying', which can occur in and outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen beyond the school day into home and private space, with a potentially bigger audience. This can include sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.

Racist Bullying

This refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that make the person feel unwelcome marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity culture, faith community, national origin or national status.

Homophobic Bullying

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual people. This includes inappropriate use of words such as 'gay' and 'lesbian' as an insult towards another person.

Sexualised Bullying or Harassment

Sexualised bullying is a behaviour, physical or non-physical, where sexuality or gender is used to hurt or intimidate another. It is any behaviour which degrades someone, singles someone out using sexual language, gestures or violence, and victimising someone for their appearance.

Prejudice-based Bullying

Prejudice focuses on the difference between 'us' and 'the other'. Prejudice based bullying is repeated hurtful behaviour that exploits or abuses someone based on their actual or supposed membership of a vulnerable group or their support for such a group. The following protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 are particularly relevant in this context: age, disability, gender/sex, gender identity, race/ethnicity, religion and sexuality.

Proactive measures to prevent Bullying

Staff training takes place regularly to ensure that all members of the school community understand what constitutes bullying and are aware of signs that bullying might be taking place. This training also includes regular safeguarding updates on 'Keeping Children Safe In Education' (KCSIE, 2025). Preventing and raising awareness of bullying is essential in keeping incidents in our school to a minimum.

At Oakwood we use:

- Golden Rules and school values
- Behaviour policy and curriculum
- Assemblies
- Protective Behaviours assemblies
- Jigsaw PSHE lessons
- Additional whole class sessions where appropriate
- Nurture and pastoral support for individuals or groups
- Early meetings with parents who are concerned their child might be being bullied.
- National 'Anti-Bullying Week' held to raise further awareness
- E-Safety integrated into the curriculum and shared with parents through workshops to raise awareness of cyber-bullying
- Senior member of staff responsible for oversight of the school's approach to anti-bullying

Pupils are taught to tell an adult in school if they are concerned that someone is being bullied

Pupils learn:

- what constitutes bullying and what to do about it.
- to develop the skills to resist bullying and to deal with bullying.
- that it is unacceptable to be a 'bystander' and do nothing when they are aware of incidents of bullying.

Pupils who have been bullied and witnesses of bullying are taught that it is "OK to tell".

Pupils are told that they must report any incident of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff.

Raising initial concerns about suspected bullying, including further actions and communication

Please note the school does not treat a report of bullying as fact until information has been gathered to corroborate the report.

The following steps should be taken by parents and staff if they suspect bullying is a concern:

- If a parent is concerned their child is the victim of bullying, they should meet with their child's class teacher at the earliest opportunity or complete a 'bullying concern form', which can be obtained from the school website or school office. A bullying concern form, which has been completed at home, should be handed to the child's class teacher or the school office
- Where a meeting with the teacher occurs, there should be a shared, explicit understanding and expression that the parent wishes to report a bullying concern by using the word bullying and the shared definition within this policy
- The parent and teacher should agree upon immediate actions as outlined below and set a date and time to discuss the progress made and any further steps to be taken
- Where a bullying concern form has been handed to the school office, it will be directed to the child's class teacher in all instances
- If the parent is reporting the bullying concern to a teacher verbally, this may be recorded on a bullying concern form by the teacher or on the school's web-based reporting suite, CPOMS
- The Anti-bullying lead will be informed of all bullying concerns, especially where there may be safeguarding issues
- The Anti-bullying lead will ensure that information is gathered by the appropriate member of staff (usually the class teacher) and remain aware of the steps taken by those members of staff involved in the situation
- If bullying includes racist abuse, then it should be reported to the Headteacher to be recorded according to the school's racist incident procedures
- Staff will use CPOMS to record a clear and precise account of bullying incidents in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken
- The Anti-bullying lead or class teacher will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate to ensure support is in place for all children
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection policies and GDPR.
 - The class teacher will follow-up with the reporting parent upon the completion of information gathering from all parties to discuss the next steps in the situation. In all instances, this should be done within 2 school days or by the date agreed upon in the initial meeting held between the teacher and parent
 - The class teacher and reporting parent should agree a timeline for actions and a review meeting (this may be a phone call or email) at the time of their second conversation on the matter
 - The Anti-bullying lead will contact the reporting parent 3 weeks after their initial meeting with the class teacher to discuss the effectiveness of actions taken
- The alleged perpetrator's class teacher will contact the child's parents to inform them that a concern has been raised about their child by another child or parent. Please note that teachers are unable to provide details, including names, due to GDPR. During this conversation, parents will be informed that a concern has been raised and what the next steps are – usually

gathering information about the incidents to understand the situation fully. The teacher and parent should agree a further date and time to discuss the situation once information has been gathered

If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, for example the police if a criminal offence has been committed, or Hertfordshire Children's Services or 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 and the school behaviour policy. If required, the Anti-bullying lead will collaborate with professionals at other settings.

Tackling confirmed Bullying and Hurtful Behaviour

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by a variety of approaches which may include:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the Anti-bullying lead, or an adult they feel safe talking to
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to any further concerns
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff and engaging with parents and carers
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Integrated Children Services or support through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by a variety of approaches which may include:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions – this may be approached in a whole-class or individual manner
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider
- Following actions as set out in the school's Behaviour Policy
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or this could include support through Early Help or Integrated Children Services or support through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

Returning Behaviours

Oakwood Primary School understands that it is possible for behaviours to return at a later date. The school encourages parents to maintain respectful contact with their child's class teacher to ensure that the situation is monitored both at home and in school.

The school takes steps to ensure situations do not repeat including but not limited to:

- Monitoring interactions between parties involved
- Maintaining effective communication so that pupils have ways of reporting incidents
- Maintaining positive relationships with families
- Adaptive seating within the classroom
- Directing children towards specific friendship possibilities
- Use of class assemblies to highlight behaviours
- Use of PSHE lessons to teach positive behaviours
- Use of Protective Behaviours assemblies to empower pupils and encourage them to speak out
- Use of our behaviour curriculum to teach positive behaviours

Where behaviours do return, Oakwood Primary School encourages pupils and parents to discuss this with the class teacher at the earliest opportunity. This allows for the following actions to occur:

- The Anti-bullying lead informed at the earliest opportunity
- Further educational consequences to be considered and implemented
- Further communication with the perpetrator's parent/carer
- Action to be taken in line with our school behaviour policy

Role of parents

In the first instance, parents should familiarise themselves with this policy in conjunction with the school's behaviour policy. If parents suspect their child is being bullied or is bullying others, in the first instance they should arrange an appointment to meet with their child's class teacher as outlined in this policy.

It is important that parents report any persistent behaviour that undermines their child's sense of well-being. All incidents, however small, will be taken seriously by school staff. A Bullying Concern Form (available on the school website) should be completed in-lieu of meeting school staff.

Where parents are informed about their child behaving in a way that has been identified as bullying behaviour, the school expects parents to support and cooperate with the actions of teachers and leaders to support all children involved.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher reports annually to the governors on behaviour and incidents of bullying. The Governing Body reviews the school's anti-bullying policy on a yearly basis.

Useful Links and Supporting Organisations

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
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- 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
- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.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
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk
- NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline: 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk
- Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: [Sexual and sexist bullying \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Childnet Project DeShame (Online Sexual Harassment and Bullying): www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-desham

