

Priory Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Title	Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
Status	AGREED
Ratified Date	Autumn 2023 – updated 2024
Ratified by	Governing Board
Review Cycle	Every two years
Review Date	Autumn 2025

1 Aim

The aim of this Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied, and to support all children and young people to maximise their attainment and achievement.

It also aims to give clear guidelines and procedures for parents, carers and school staff to minimise the risk that any child becomes a victim, either of bullying or of false accusation of bullying.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' is used to mean a pupil's parent, carer or guardian.

2 Statutory duties of schools

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 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

3 Scope of this policy and links to other policies

This policy includes:

- bullying of pupils by pupils within school
- bullying of and/or by pupils outside of school, where the school is aware of it
- bullying online of and/or by pupils, where the school is aware of it

Allegations about bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the school's Safeguarding Policy and / or Whistleblowing Policy.

This policy has links to the following school policies and procedures:

- PSHE curriculum policy
- Relationships Education (including SRE) curriculum policy
- Equality Objectives
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy and safeguarding procedures
- eSafety Policy and acceptable use policies
- Complaints Procedure

This policy takes into account DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also takes into account the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” 2025. The school has read Childnet’s “Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools”.

4 Definition

We adopt the Anti-Bullying Alliance definition of bullying which says:

- Bullying is intentional
- Bullying is repeated / sustained
- Bullying involves power imbalance
- Bullying causes fear and isolation of an individual

4.1 Bullying can be:

- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, taking and damaging property
- **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, taunting, threats, offensive remarks
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobia, exposure to inappropriate films, etc.
- **Online:** posting on social media, sharing photos, abusive texts, social exclusion - see also Cyber Bullying 4.3

4.2 Types of bullying

- **Racist:** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures due to difference of culture or religion
- **Sexist:** because the person is a male or female

- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic:** because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- **Transphobic:** because a person identifies differently to the gender assigned at birth, their identified gender being intentionally disrespected or ignored
- **Appearance:** size, impairment or disfigurement
- **Disability:** learning or physical

The school recognises that bullying that is motivated by prejudice is a particular concern, for example racist, sexist and homophobic bullying and bullying related to perceptions about disability and/or special educational needs. All staff will be provided with appropriate training in equality and diversity, so that they are equipped to tackle these issues on a wider scale as well as in relation to bullying. Further details of our commitment to this can be found in our Equality Objectives statement.

4.3 Online (or “Cyber”) Bullying

Cyber-bullying takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Like other forms of bullying, it is the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. As such the school will respond in exactly the same way as all forms of bullying and as outlined in section 7. Policies and procedures for incidents of cyber-bullying are also part of our eSafety Policy / Child Protection Policy.

By the nature of the online environment, it is more likely that incidents of cyber-bullying will take place outside of school. Pupils and parents are encouraged to take a screenshot of the evidence and to seek help from any member of staff they wish to approach. If parents suspect that a criminal act has been committed (such as harassment, threatening and abusive messages or the distribution of intimate images without consent), they should contact the police, and let the school know if they are comfortable to do so.

Pupils may not have their mobiles or home devices in school, so will have to involve their parents in reporting. If they are not comfortable to do this, pupils can report and seek support from Childline, CEOP or speak to an adult in school.

4.4 Non-specific or multi-targets

Where individuals or groups bully different people, this will be seen as a pattern of bullying behaviour and treated as such.

5 Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate if a child:

- changes their usual routine
- unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- fakes illness in an attempt to avoid school
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- begins to do poorly in school work
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- bullies other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

A child may express feelings that suggest they are being bullied. When, over a period of time, someone, or a groups of people's behavior leaves them feeling:

- Physically and/or mentally hurt or worried
- Unsafe and/or frightened
- Unable to do well and achieve
- 'Badly different', alone, unimportant and/or unvalued
- Unable to see a happy and exciting future for themselves

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

6 Identifying and reporting concerns about bullying

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Pupils who are being bullied will have already experienced this over a period of time, and have shown considerable courage to speak up.

Pupils who are bullying others also need support to help them understand and change their behaviour.

Pupils who are aware of bullying ('bystanders') can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way.

All pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by:

- talking to a member of staff of their choice
- contacting local and national support agencies for advice/support

Staff who are being bullied will be encouraged to report it to a colleague of their choice.

Parents will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the school in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to problems escalating.

7 Responding to reports about bullying

7.1 School

The school will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware of it
- A clear account of the concern will be recorded and given to the Headteacher / DSL, Assistant Head / DSL or Inclusion Lead
- The senior leader (as above) will first establish the facts and build an accurate picture of events over time by speaking to the alleged perpetrator, the targets and adult witnesses, as well as parents and pupil witnesses if necessary
- A record of this will be held in line with the school's data protection policy/practice. Class teachers will be kept informed and if it persists the class teacher will advise the appropriate adults
- Parents and other relevant adults will be kept informed
- Where bullying occurs outside school, any other relevant schools or agencies (e.g. youth clubs, transport providers) will be informed about the concerns and any actions taken
- If the allegation is upheld, the Headteacher (or other senior leader) will seek a restorative approach in the first instance
- If the situation does not improve, appropriate punitive measures will be taken.

7.2 Pupils and staff

Pupils and staff who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed
- offering continuous support
- restoring self-esteem and confidence
- the use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. educational psychology, where appropriate
- Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:
 - discussing what happened
 - discovering why the pupil became involved
 - establishing the wrong doing and need to change
 - informing parents to help change the attitude of the pupil
 - the use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies where appropriate
- The following disciplinary steps can be taken:
 - official warnings to cease offending
 - exclusion from certain areas of school premises
 - exclusion from playtime and lunchtime activities
 - minor fixed-term suspension
 - major fixed-term suspension
 - permanent exclusion

7.3 Parents

- Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. Parents are asked to understand that we must be sure the term 'bullying' is being used correctly, as some behaviours can turn out to be part of children's disagreements and learning to get along with others. The key aspects of the behaviour to consider are 'repeated' 'intentional' and 'imbalance of power'; all bullying incidents will be investigated as detailed above
- Where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure.
- Where a pupil is involved in bullying others outside school, e.g. in the street or through the use of the internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the school in addressing their child's behaviour, for example restricting/monitoring their use of the internet or mobile phone.
- Referral of the family to external support agencies will be made where appropriate

8 Preventative measures

The school will:

- educate pupils about the nature of bullying through the PSHE curriculum, assemblies, formal and informal discussion
- build pupils' self-esteem and assertive language, as tools to help them stand up for themselves and others
- emphasise the role of all pupils in challenging their peers if they think that behaviour is unfriendly, unkind or bullying
- educate pupils about the particular nature of online or "cyber" bullying, and ensure all pupils understand the conduct expected of them when online
- issue all pupils with Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) agreements
- participate in national and local initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week
- foster links with agencies and services in the wider community that will support inclusive anti-bullying education
- make sure that newcomers to the school have 'buddies' in their class, who are emotionally sensitive to the challenges of joining a new school
- promote an understanding amongst parents of the difference between frequent 'falling out', rough play and bullying

9 Promotion of this policy

The regular review of this policy will include consultation with pupils, parents and staff.

It will be made available as a paper copy on request from the school office, posted to the Policies section of the school website, and available to all staff, electronically and on paper.

10 Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Head Teacher / DSL will lead on the implementation of the policy, in tandem with the Inclusion Lead and Deputy DSL, and will be responsible for communications with the local authority regarding bullying concerns and reports.

The Governors will monitor data relating to any incidents of bullying via the Head Teacher's reports to the governing body, including statistics about:

- the number of reported concerns
- monitoring information about the pupils involved
- motivations for bullying
- actions taken and outcomes

Statistical information will be provided to the local authority, as required termly, or on request.

The school will review the policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.