



Anti-bullying Policy Spring 2024

Next review: Sept 2026

What the Law Says:

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 provide that the proprietor of an Academy or other independent school ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.

The Equality Act 2010

A key provision in The Equality Act 2010 is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came into force on 5 April 2011 and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Maintained schools and Academies are required to comply with the PSED. In addition Part 6 of the Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. In England and Wales Part 6 of the Act applies to maintained schools and Academies and to other independent schools.

In addition to the duties in relation to pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act, schools also have duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to ensure that pupils with special educational needs engage in the activities of the school together with children who do not have special educational needs.

At The Grove Primary School we do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. This policy explains the school's approach to preventing and dealing with bullying. It should also be read in conjunction with the school's policy on Behaviour and Discipline. All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. The policy and procedures described below aim to minimise the occurrence of bullying and should give clarity to parents, pupils and staff so that, if incidents do occur, they are dealt with quickly. School staff members have received training and relevant guidance on tackling bullying. The School believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

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 or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.

Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways. It may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Bullying is not:

- teasing and banter* between friends without intention to cause hurt
- falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement
- behaviour that all parties have consented to and enjoy
- a single act of unkind behaviour

**Banter can cause unintended upset. Children are taught to recognise when their behaviour or words impact other's Zones of Regulation. Banter should not continue if upset is begun caused.*

It should not be confused with 'relational conflict' whereby two or more children get into conflict but the dispute is equally provoked and both sides have been hurtful to the other.

Bullying can take a number of forms:

- **Physical** – hitting, pushing, gesturing, taking or damaging personal belongings or any unwanted physical contact

- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, racist taunts, sexually abusive comments; comments related to physical/social disability

- **Psychological** – ignoring someone, excluding, glaring, isolating a person, graffiti, rumour spreading, sending unwanted text messages or emails, publishing hurtful material on social networking sites (cyber-bullying).

Bullying is different from the normal disagreements which sometimes occur in the playground or classroom, when children learn to deal with differences of opinion amongst peers. It is focused antisocial behaviour directed intentionally at a 'victim' with malicious intent, usually over a period of time. It can happen in public – such as physical assault in the playground, or it can be very subtle and harder to detect – such as the spreading of rumours or deliberate social exclusion.

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Child on Child abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries him/ herself to sleep at night or has nightmares/ bedwetting
- regularly feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- has possessions go missing
- has unexplained cuts and bruises
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- changes his/her usual routine

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the appropriate person. It should also be borne in mind that there may be many causes of the above signs that are not necessarily bullying.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff would report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, we might- in extreme circumstances - draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child 'doing' the bullying.

In July 2017, the government produced new advice Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies and this has informed our school's policy.

Bullying outside School Premises

Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it would be investigated and acted on. Parents would be informed. The head teacher would also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator.

Prevention

At The Grove, school staff are proactive in sharing issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve integrating anti-bullying work into the curriculum by talking to pupils about issues of difference (perhaps in PSHCE lessons)- such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality -through dedicated events or projects, (eg drama workshops and participation in annual Anti-Bullying weeks—usually November of each year; involvement of Childline etc); through assemblies; through careful playground monitoring and communication between duty staff, lunchtime supervisors and class teachers and 'Special friend' buddy system.

Staff members themselves also determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.

We also teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable.

We endeavour to involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents need to feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

At The Grove, we regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers annually.

Regular class discussions about responsibilities of all members of the school community make it easier for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. We aim to create an inclusive environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.

Our pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying.

Information or concerns are shared between staff through regular staff meetings and briefings and the team is strengthened through lunchtime support for children by Learning Support Assistants who also work in the classrooms

Staff members are aware that vulnerable groups to be especially aware of are

- Looked after children
- Traveller groups
- Children with disabilities
- Children with SEN
- Children from ethnic minority groups

Our school has an ethos of celebrating good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others are implicit in the school's culture and environment and are reinforced by staff and modelled by older pupils who set a good example to the rest. We also celebrate success. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED.

At The Grove, we apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. If bullying is suspected we talk to the victim, the suspected perpetrator and any witnesses. Older children may be asked to complete an 'Incident report'. If any degree of bullying is identified, disciplinary actions are applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have. Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies since it is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

We support **victims** in the following ways: by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another adult if they choose informing the victims' parents/guardians by offering continuing support when they feel they need it.

We try to help the **bully** in the following ways:

In the first instance, class teachers will talk about what happened to discover why a child has become involved. In line with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy, discussions take place and

interventions are implemented in line with the policy such as restorative approaches (encouraging those who have caused harm to acknowledge the impact of what they have done and give them an opportunity to make reparation and those who have suffered harm the opportunity to have their harm or loss acknowledged and amends made or peer support).

Sanctions are put in place which vary according to the severity of the incident and the previous behaviour of the pupil or pupils involved.

Sanctions can range from reprimands or serious talks, temporary removal from class, withdrawal of privileges and rewards, detentions and punishment (e.g. litter picking/school clean-ups); perpetrators may be excluded from the playground at break and/or lunch times. In extreme situations there may be minor fixed period or later permanent exclusion as per the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

A combination of sanctions as well as a restorative approach enables the bully to reflect on their actions, empathise with the victim and make amends for the hurt they have caused. If a neutral relationship can be re-established it is far less likely that bullying will continue.

When allegations of bullying are substantiated, the child's parents/carers are informed and their support sought for sanctions that are put in place. All incidents are logged on CPOMS and reported to the Phase Leader and Academy Head.

All records are saved and stored electronically. Incidents are filed by pupil name which enables repeat perpetrators (bullies) to be identified. A system of recording alleged and proven bullying is in place. In any case of bullying, follow up monitoring is put in place and recorded in the incident file.

We give the following advice to children in circle time, assembly or PSHCE discussions:

What to do if you think you are being bullied at school:

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive – say the school code: 'Stop it, I don't like it!' Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff if they do it again.
- f) Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- g) Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying

and will not make things worse for you.

If you know someone is being bullied:

- a) TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Management of relational conflict when the threshold for bullying is not met

At The Grove we recognise that relational conflict that does not meet the threshold for bullying can cause considerable upset and harm. If a child feels unhappy or unsafe at school they will be supported and coached so that these feelings are relieved. While it is against policy to share details of consequences for potential perpetrators of harm, the victim must know that the matter is in hand and that consequences are in place. The detail shared with victims is carefully managed so that GDPR regulations are adhered to. However, the victim must know that they are being listened to and support is in place.

What to do if you think your child is being bullied at school

- Calmly discuss this with your child and note what they say has happened. Who was involved? How often have the incidents occurred? Listen to your child and value their feelings and worries.
- Talk to your child’s Class Teacher as soon as possible. Agree an Action Plan and involve your child in this.
- Learn about the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures.
- Keep a record of what is suggested by the teacher and give them time to investigate and implement strategies that will not make the situation worse.

If you are unhappy with the teacher’s response or actions, or if the bullying continues, then you must contact the Head teacher and use the school’s complaints procedure.

- If the bullying is taking place outside of school and/or involves cyber-bullying (use of mobile phones or computers) then discuss this with the Head teacher in the first instance.

What Is Not Helpful

- Telling your child to hit back or escalate the situation by aggression.
- Trying to tackle other children or parents yourself

- Keeping quiet about it
- Treating the school as part of the problem, when it could be part of the solution

Protocol for reporting incidents of bullying within school

Teachers will report immediately incidents which involve the following behaviours using the behaviour incident form process:

- a. Severe intentional hurting
- b. Racist remarks
- c. Bullying as defined in the above policy
- d. Theft

Alongside this procedure, teachers will keep a log of any incidents concerning their own class. Incidents will be recorded detailing if a child is a suspected victim/bully. If the child's name occurs more than twice (i.e on the third occasion) it will be reported using the behaviour incident log form and sent to the Head Teacher.

Protocol on how the school will respond to reported incidents

The class teacher will initially deal with incidents that have been reported or noted within their class, eliciting support and guidance when and if appropriate.

Incidents logged on the behaviour incident log form will automatically involve the intervention of the Phase Leader, Deputy Head or Head Teacher.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy every 2 years and assess its implementation and effectiveness through use of data from pupil and/or parent and carer surveys, log of bullying incidents, records of parental complaints and outcomes, exclusions for bullying or related behaviour, and attendance figures. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

and aligns with the school's Grove Code.

In addition it adheres to the principles within Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2018 and DfE publication : Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017