

Anti-Bullying Policy

Meadowdale Primary School



Date: November 2024
Review Date: November 2026
Responsibility of: Governors

Aims of the Policy

At Meadowdale Primary School our primary aim is to prevent bullying from occurring but, where it does, we deal with it decisively and promptly.

Our vision is to always strive to do the right thing with kindness. Our Moral Purpose is that we believe that equity is paramount and that everyone has the right to learn and work in an environment where they can flourish, achieve excellence and their wellbeing is a priority. [1] To ensure this happens, our Promoting Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, E-safety and Equality Information and Objectives policies [2] provide a robust framework so all children, staff and governors understand what behaviour is expected; how to encourage good behaviour and how to deal with unwanted behaviour.

This policy will outline how our children learn to develop a sense of self-worth and to respect similarities and differences – through various teaching methods and environmental features. In addition it will show how we help children to develop self-discipline and to understand how their actions impact on others and how to be sensitive to other children's situations.

Further details on our Ethos and Moral Purpose is included in our Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

What is bullying?

Meadowdale Primary School agrees with the Anti-Bullying Alliance's view of bullying which states:

'Bullying is 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.'

This policy includes bullying of children and staff by pupils, parents or staff.

Kinds of bullying can include, but are not limited to:

- Physical: Pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching, damage to property etc.
- Verbal: Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, nasty teasing, insults and belittling.
- Emotional, psychological and indirect: Isolating others, rumours, social exclusion, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, coercion and exploitation.
- Online/cyber: Carried out using ICT and the internet, including using AI, via mobile phones, electronic devices such as computers for posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, sending messages in online games and social exclusion

Forms of Bullying

Bullying behaviour can be based on prejudice or negative attitudes and any member of our community can be a target of bullying behaviours, including staff.

Some forms of bullying are aimed at specific groups or based on factors which put individuals at a greater risk of being bullied. These groups include but are not solely restricted to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010) of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Brief definitions: types of prejudice-related bullying

- **Bullying based on disability (disablist)** – is where the motivation for bullying is based on the target's real or perceived disability, special need, gifted or talented or health conditions or association with someone in those categories or association with someone with a disability/special need.
- **Bullying based on gender reassignment (transphobic)** – is when the motivation for bullying relates to the target being trans, or perceived to be trans, or their gender or gender identity being seen as different to typical gender norms. A person could also be targeted because they have a trans family member.
- **Bullying based on race or ethnicity (racist)** - is where the motivation for bullying is based on the targets skin colour, culture, language, ethnicity or national origin.
- **Bullying based on religion or belief** – is where the motivation for bullying relates to the target's beliefs, faith, or identity. It may also be because of a perception or assumption about religion, belief or lack of belief (which may or may not be accurate), or because of their association with an individual or group of a particular religion or belief.
- **Bullying based on sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic)** – is where the motivation for bullying is based on the target's sexual orientation, or perceived orientation, or that of their family/friends and/or homophobic/biphobic abuse and language used. Bisexual people may experience homophobic bullying, but they are also likely to experience biphobic bullying.
- **Bullying based on sex (sexist)** – is where the motivation for bullying is based on sexist language, attitudes and behaviours that when expressed demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender.

Definitions for other forms of bullying

- **Bullying based on appearance or health conditions** – is where the motivation for bullying relates to the target's physical appearance (e.g. hair colour, body shape, or clothing), or a health condition (e.g. a disfigurement, a traumatic injury, or severe skin condition).
- **Bullying based on home circumstance** – is where the motivation for bullying is based on the target's living arrangements (e.g. being a young carer or a child in care), geographic locality (i.e. where they live), their class background, whether they are from a low income family or in receipt of free school meals.

Prevention of Bullying

At Meadowdale Primary School we have high expectations of behaviour; teaching children social skills and active promotion of good behaviour are the key elements to ensure bullying does not occur. Using government research [3] to inform our decisions, the following methods are used to achieve these aims:

- Meadowdale Primary School's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy is available on our website and outlines how good behaviour is taught, praised and encouraged so children understand what is expected of them and can learn from good role models.
- There is regular and focused teaching of Personal, Social and Health Education as this is a key factor in ensuring children know how to treat each other well and are able to discuss feelings. We follow the Cambridgeshire Primary Personal Development Programme. (More details on this are available on the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy under 'Curriculum' and also in our year group specific curriculum overviews).
- Children are taught about appropriate use of the internet and social media through PSHE and ICT lessons, including what it is and how to deal with cyber bullying. We use the National Centre for Computing Education scheme.
- Training is given to lunchtime staff on games and activities for children as well as use and implementation of the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Assemblies are given to ensure children know what bullying is; what to do if it happens; who to ask for help and that they are all responsible, even if they are not actively bullying.
- All school staff actively listen to children about behaviour issues and respond with tailored learning, where appropriate, before issues escalate into bullying. Incidents of unwanted behaviour are recorded to help identify patterns of behaviour. Our unwanted behaviour reporting forms have an area to identify whether the incident is linked to bullying. We record all unwanted behaviour in MyConcern, our safeguarding portal, and have specific tags for different types of bullying. This makes analysis much clearer so that patterns can be identified. The system also allows us to link others as victims, witnesses or perpetrators.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed every two years.
- We have a governor who takes responsibility for overseeing our policy and practice. Incidents of bullying are shared with the local governing body.
- A team of Play Leaders are trained to lead play activities and games at lunchtime. Assemblies are held to explain this to the school.
- The School Council is consulted on matters relating to Anti-Bullying.

What to do if bullying occurs

Meadowdale Primary School's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy outlines how unwanted behaviour should be dealt with. 'Unwanted behaviour' becomes bullying when it is intentional, repetitive and involves an imbalance of power.

- Children who feel they are being bullied can read our child-friendly policy which is available in every classroom or look at the Anti-Bullying display – this will explain the steps below.
- If a child experiences unwanted behaviour they, or a child who witnessed it, should contact an adult on duty or an adult they feel comfortable sharing the information with. This adult will take their concerns seriously and talk to the child concerned then interview children who were also involved and/or witnessed the behaviour. Children are encouraged to understand they are responsible for preventing bullying by telling adults about incidents they witness.
- Children will be supported and believed when they report an incident of bullying.
- This information should be written on an Unwanted Behaviour Incident Report Form. Information on these forms is recorded centrally – including which children are involved. There is a section on these forms to show if the incident included an allegation of bullying.
- If you are a parent/carer who becomes aware of unwanted behaviour or bullying relating to your child or another child, contact your child's class teacher

in the first instance. The teacher will follow the same steps to find out more about, record and deal with the unwanted behaviour.

- Consequences are clearly outlined and include keeping a record of behaviour, missing playtimes, informing the Senior Leadership Team and talking to parents about personal behaviour plans. In this way, persistent unwanted behaviour is highlighted and consequences and/or teaching can be targeted.
- All the details are available on the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy on our website.

How we deal with bullying

When bullying has been identified, all those involved should be interviewed and the Unwanted Behaviour Records should be filled in as well as the Record of Allegation of Bullying form. This identifies the target, aggressor/s, participants and witnesses. In addition, the following details will be recorded: full dates, how parents have been informed, which adults at school are involved, subsequent incidents, restorative work and/or an action plan, a time frame, who will monitor it, how outcomes will be communicated and what needs to happen for the plan to be successful.

Plans developed should consider

- Restorative work with the pupils involved, with a written record of this
- Times the pupils are together and how this can be monitored and managed by an adult
- PSHE learning needed for the cohort.

All parties affected by bullying, starting with the target and including parents where necessary, will have the time and space to talk to a senior member of staff about how the incident or incidents have affected them. The school will then decide whether further support is needed to both prevent recurrences and ensure the well-being of everyone involved. An adult, chosen by the child who experienced bullying, will also check in with the child at regular intervals after the bullying has stopped to help with any wellbeing issues created by the bullying.

When a criminal offence is believed to have been committed the police will be informed.

If bullying occurs off the school premises the school still has the power to investigate and discipline children if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. The head teacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator. [4] The process outlined above will also be followed with situations that occur off the school premises.

Timescales for actions when bullying occurs

- Parents will be informed within 24 hours if the Record of Allegation of Bullying form is filled in.
- An Action Plan will be written within 7 days of bullying being identified, which gives times, for all parties to be involved.
- All methods used will be recorded in writing and the situation will be monitored at least once a day.
- If no significant improvement is seen within 2 weeks the plan will be updated
- When 4 weeks have passed with no repeat of the bullying, the plan will be updated to say what will happen on an ongoing basis.
- If the bullying re-occurs, a new plan will be devised, with reference to the previous issues.

Disseminating the policy

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be available on the school's website and will be shared with teaching and support staff annually at staff meetings and with support staff at a meeting at the beginning of each school year.

The child-friendly policy will be available in each classroom.

The Headteacher, Liz Martin, is the member of staff with lead responsibility for dealing with bullying and **Stella McCabe** is the lead governor for this area.

The policy was reviewed in 2024.

[1] Meadowdale Primary School Vision and Aims (see website for more details.)

[2] Policies are all available on the school's website

[3] The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools – Department for Education.

[4] Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies – Department for Education.