



## Anti- Bullying Policy

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This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” 2020 and ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’ guidance. The setting has also read Childnet’s “Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools” and DfE research into antibullying practices:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/approaches-to-preventing-andtackling-bullying](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/approaches-to-preventing-andtackling-bullying)

***Enjoy learning and working together to achieve our best.***

Dunmow St. Mary’s School is committed to a policy of inclusion, to equality and justice. We believe that

- everyone in our school should feel safe and be treated with respect, regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation
- bullying and prejudicial behaviour is totally unacceptable
- where bullying or prejudicial behaviour is managed effectively pupils will feel safe and happy.
- we label the behaviour as unacceptable and not the person

Our Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with our school’s Behaviour and Inclusion Policies.

### **Aims**

In our school we want all children;

- To feel safe and to learn, play and enjoy the company of others
- To be treated fairly, with respect and dignity

We will listen carefully to what children have to say and treat all children’s accounts with due seriousness.

### **Definition of bullying behaviour**

- Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)
- Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

### **Forms and Types of Bullying**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- 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
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics):  
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

We will also work with parents, children and members of staff to understand what is **not** bullying. Friendship fall-outs and arguments do **not** constitute bullying on their own. The definition above stresses the repeated nature of bullying over a period of time. Sometimes pupils will use the term “bullying” inappropriately because they have had an argument, friendship fall-out or simply not got their own way.

Pupils’ understanding varies with age. Infants may confuse bullying with fighting and falling out, sometimes making it difficult to identify actual bullying. Older Key Stage 2 children tend to develop more of a mature understanding and should, with support and guidance, develop strategies to cope with low level unkind remarks and actions.

PHSE lessons and whole school assemblies, as well as opportunities to work in small social skills groups, will help to develop an understanding of how to deal with unkind

remarks in a positive way as well as working with children to reduce the instances of unkindness.

Collective worship is based on the Values for Life resources. In this way we expect every child, adult and the parents of the children in our school to become aware of core values that underpin respect for others and for themselves.

### **Preventing Bullying**

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Recognise the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of inclusion and equality, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

### **Additional strategies to develop social skills**

In school we also recognise that good social and emotional literacy skills result in increased ability to deal with negative comments and behaviour.

**Children are encouraged to develop these skills using the following strategies:**

- Values based whole school and class assemblies focussing on one key value per term
- Restorative Justice Strategies
- Teaching assertiveness and making good choices in PHSE and in whole school assemblies.
- Using ideas from SMART Thinking in small groups or class situations
- Learning about different cultures through visits, speakers and links with other cultures.
- Linking the policy to our core values and aims.
- Explicit teaching to link actions and consequences from Reception onwards
- Listening carefully to pupils and providing opportunities to express views and opinions during class council, circle time, and class assemblies
- Involving parents and the wider community through newsletters and Parentmail
- Making use of curriculum opportunities to raise pupil awareness eg through RE, cross curricular themes, drama, story writing and literature

- Including all staff in regular training in No Blame approaches
- Involving governors, parents and staff in the development of the Anti-bullying policy. Ensuring that the anti-bullying Policy is closely linked to the behaviour policy
- Dealing sensitively and quickly with bullying incidents.

### **Responding to Bullying**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell an adult and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell an adult in school whom they trust.

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils with bullying behaviour need to learn different ways of behaving.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying behaviour.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
- The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, 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. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools.
- Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.

- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

### **Cyberbullying**

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - looking at use of the school systems;
  - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
  - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (We will access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the schools powers are used proportionately and lawfully)
  - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include: advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply; providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists; helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

If a child has shown bullying or prejudicial behaviour the action followed will depend on the severity of the incident. The following plan will be followed after the bullying or prejudicial incident has occurred using restorative justice conferencing techniques where the views of both sides will be explored.

Respect- for yourself /for others  
Responsibility for your actions  
Repairing the relationship  
Reintegration

This will hopefully lead to the children taking responsibility for their actions, repairing the relationship and reintegration. Consequences may need to be put in place when the parties decide 'what needs to be done to put things right.' In this way we hope to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own actions. We believe that rather than just punishing unacceptable behaviour this approach leads to long term change in behaviour. It also means that the person showing bullying behaviour has to acknowledge what they have done and think about the impact on others.

Parents will be informed of the incident and a behaviour plan or loss of privileges may be put in place. Regular monitoring will take place by named members of staff- Pastoral Care Team, Head teacher, Deputy Headteacher or SENCo.

Consequences will be decided and the parents and child informed. The bullied child and parents will be informed of the agreed sanctions.

Progress will be reviewed weekly at first and then at regular intervals.

The SENCO or Pastoral Care Support may be involved with the children involved in bullying or prejudicial issues to restore the relationship and monitor the situation closely.

#### **Fixed-term and permanent exclusions**

If the bullying or prejudice persists, or children are at risk, then the Head teacher will exclude the child who is bullying others for a fixed period. Please see the [exclusions policy](#) for more information on this process.

#### **What should Parents do if they feel their child is being bullied or experiences prejudicial behaviour?**

Any parent contacting the school with a particular concern will always be taken seriously.

The first point of contact for the parent will usually be through the child's class teacher. Serious concerns will then be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team.

A meeting may be called with the children involved and the problem will be explored using Restorative Justice techniques.

Clear agreements and boundaries will be put in place and followed up in class and in the playground.

Parents will be kept informed of the outcome of the meeting by the class teacher or Phase Leader or a member of the Senior Management Team.