



WIMBLEDON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Approved: February 2024

Next revision: February 2027

Headteacher:	Mr Paul Lufkin
Deputy Headteacher:	Miss Lisa Kingsbury
Anti-Bullying leader:	Ms Jill Manning
Chair of Governors:	Martin Pfutzner
Anti-Bullying Governor:	

Aims:

Everyone at Wimbledon Park Primary School has the right to feel welcome, safe and happy. We celebrate diversity in our school and value co-operation, tolerance, kindness and respect for others. We want our school to be the kind of place where everyone can learn, achieve and feel confident and secure.

Bullying of any sort goes against these values. It can seriously affect the well-being and mental health of those being bullied and be a significant barrier to learning.

Therefore, tackling bullying matters and as a school, we believe that it is everyone's responsibility to say 'No!' to bullying as... **Nobody ever deserves to be the target of bullying.**

At WPPS, we aim to:

- celebrate difference and diversity and create an atmosphere of tolerance and respect
- continually find ways to boost pupils' confidence, self-esteem, well-being and resilience
- promote an anti-bullying ethos
- create an environment in which pupils, staff or parents can report bullying behaviour
- protect, support and reassure anyone who experiences bullying and respond in the best way possible as outlined in this policy
- help children who bully others to understand that this is not acceptable and to seek out and challenge any underlying problems causing the behaviour
- make sure that pupils, staff and parents are clear about our expectations regarding behaviour and on how we need to all work together to tackle bullying.

This policy links with our policies on Behaviour and Relationships, School Improvement, Equality and Diversity, Teaching and Learning, Inclusion and SEND, Health and Safety, Online Safety and Safeguarding.

This policy is for pupils parents and staff and is available:

- on the school website www.wimbledonpark.merton.sch.uk
- from the school office on request
- at new staff inductions

Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the policy and for appointing an Anti-bullying leader. The Anti-bullying leader in our school is Mrs Jill Manning.

The Anti-bullying leader's responsibilities are:

- to make sure the policy is followed and reviewed/updated regularly
- to involve pupils, parents, staff and governors in the review process

- to co-ordinate strategies for preventing bullying behaviour
- to co-ordinate training and support for staff
- lead an Anti-Bullying week in school every year

The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for reporting bullying to the Local Authority and will work in collaboration with phase Assistant Headteachers and class teachers to deal with these incidents..

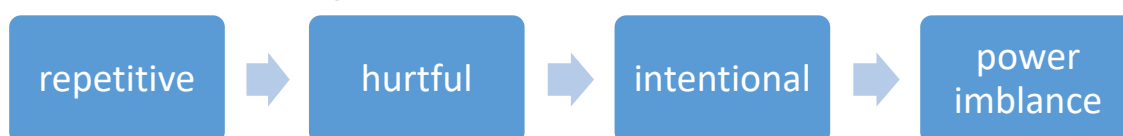
What is bullying?

Many children will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and as a school we are committed to developing the skills in children to manage their relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others. The school works hard to ensure that all children know the difference between bullying and simply “falling out”.

We have a shared definition of bullying to ensure a common understanding and which distinguishes bullying from other relational conflict:

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.”



We define the different roles included in bullying for children: namely that of *victim, bully, reinforcer, bystander and defender* and encourage our pupils to be *defenders* whenever possible. Bullying is seen to be a group phenomenon. Others can have a significant influence on the outcomes of behaviours in school either intentionally or otherwise.

Child on child abuse

It is important to also recognise that there is a close relationship between bullying and wider child on child abuse. Child on child abuse occurs when a child or young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age both inside and outside of school and online. KCSIE 2023 highlights the need for all schools to be vigilant and recognise the many types of child on child abuse. Child on child abuse includes violence, sexual violence and online abuse. Staff should be aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. Some but not all child on child abuse will amount to bullying.

Types of bullying behaviour

Bullying can take many forms:

- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, pinching, biting or any use of violence
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, baiting, malicious banter
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour, extortion by for example, demanding money/goods with threats

- Online bullying – use of social media, messaging and calls; and misuse of associated technology e.g. photos and videos.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments; derogatory language, exposure to inappropriate images

Baiting and banter can be subtle and interpreted in different ways by different people. Therefore, the meaning of these terms and examples related to the age of pupils need to be explored in classes so that pupils know that they can also be forms of bullying.

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretly to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get in to trouble.

The dictionary describes **banter** as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'. Bullying is often justified as being just banter but sometimes banter can be malicious and will therefore need to be addressed as bullying. We use the following terms to describe types of banter with pupils...

Friendly Banter - there's no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits

Ignorant Banter - crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry

Malicious Banter - done to humiliate a person - often in public

Online bullying

Since the pandemic, more children and young people have had access to online learning and have used social media more to keep in touch and this has given opportunities for online bullying. The rise in use of digital platforms and social media across all ages has been well documented. The potential for online bullying has increased and will need to remain a focus for us both in and outside of school. We have a responsibility to ensure pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and as part of that will be taught that social media and messaging content can be difficult to control. Once messages and images have been shared, it can be impossible to delete them. This is important in relation to bullying as it may mean the target being reminded of the incidents long after the issues have been resolved.

Online bullying can include:

- sending threatening or abusive messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, group chats or online games
- excluding others from online games or group chats.
- shaming someone online
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child or young person
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages of another child or young person without their consent
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

Specific types of bullying include:

- prejudice related bullying of children with special educational needs or disabilities,
- homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying
- bullying related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to appearance or health

- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying

Discrimination and prejudiced based bullying

This policy acknowledges that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of the following protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010):

- age
- gender identity
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Prejudice Related Language

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even one-off incidents, and report them to the local authority for monitoring purposes. These behaviours will be reported directly to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms will be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. However, we are keenly aware of national research which shows that some groups of pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include pupils with SEND, children who are looked after, pupils from minority ethnic groups or faiths, young carers, LGBT pupils and those perceived to be LGBT.

Where can bullying happen?

Bullying is not confined to the school premises. It can also happen outside of school – on the journey to and from school or in the local community.

The school acknowledges its responsibility to support families if bullying occurs off the premises.

Preventing Bullying

Prevention is better than cure so we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. Within the curriculum, we will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate bullying behaviour. We also take part annually in national anti-bullying week to raise awareness and train pupils and staff.

In our school we do this by:

- Creating a safe and happy environment with positive relationships.
- Building a positive ethos based on respecting all types of difference in our school.
- Using assemblies and circle time in class to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.
- Encouraging children to use social media and technology responsibly and carefully through PSHE and Computing lessons.
- Through our zones of regulation curriculum and approach to emotion coaching
- Having a positive behaviour and relationships policy, consistently implemented.
- Helping our pupils to develop empathy, social skills and emotional understanding e.g. PSHE, social and emotional learning programmes, circle time and restorative approaches,
- Providing focused work with individuals and groups of pupils where required to support understanding and development of social skills
- Ensuring midday staff are trained and we have a range of activities at lunchtime to promote positive play.

Reporting bullying

In our school pupils are encouraged to talk to staff when they are unhappy or have concerns. Children are taught to report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another child tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report this to a member of staff. We regularly remind children that it is the collective responsibility of the whole school community to do whatever they can to stop bullying. We teach children in our school to understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe. Each year group has a child friendly poster directing them to which adults they could go to if they have any worries.

Pupils can report bullying in a number of ways. These include:

- to any trusted adult or agreed named adult for our more vulnerable pupils
- to their Class teacher or Support Staff
- anonymously through "Worry boxes"

We remind pupils that they should report all incidences of bullying online as they would face to face incidents.

Parents are also encouraged to report concerns and bullying to the class teacher or a member of the leadership team.

Responding to Bullying

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of bullying incidents on the serious incident form (see Appendix 1) as well as in the behaviour management module of SIMs.

The class teacher completes these following discussion with their phase Assistant Headteacher who will then liaise with the Deputy Headteacher to collectively investigate and decide next steps. The investigating adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on establishing facts, finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

For children that are bullying, they can often feel very stuck in their negative and hurtful behaviour. They can feel trapped in a cycle themselves and find it hard to see how they are able to change. They may, for example, be trying to 'impress' other children, feel that it is expected of them or have experienced bullying themselves. It is therefore often helpful to look at the wider group when developing responses to bullying. It is also important to note that children and young people may not always feel able to stand up to bullying and may worry about becoming the target themselves. Finding a solution to the bullying may involve work with this wider group to understand what is driving the behaviours.

Responding to Bullying Checklist

- Think about any safeguarding concern and report concerns to DSL if appropriate.
- Provide assurances to child/parents that concerns have been listened to and action will be taken
- Consider who else is involved and what roles they have taken.
- Send clear message that the bullying must stop
- Record incident
- Report incident to parents of those involved
- Work with the target of the bullying and their parents to find solutions. Identify the most effective way of preventing re-occurrence and any consequences.
- Restorative approaches can be applied if target agrees.
- Reflect and learn from bullying episodes – consider what needs to happen next to prevent future bullying e.g whole class lesson or circle time, training etc.
- Review outcomes

secure the safety of the target of bullying



take actions to stop the bullying from happening again



whole school learning - reflection on what we have learnt

As well as recording incidents, we monitor all serious behaviour and bullying incidents to determine any patterns or trends that may require further action. All bullying incidents are reported to the Local Authority on a termly basis. On a regular basis we give pupils the opportunity to feedback on how safe and happy they feel at school through pupil questionnaires (annually) and classroom discussions e.g. during anti bullying week and regularly in PSHE lessons or circle times.

Communication with Parents/Carers

We do not label any child as a 'bully'. This is unhelpful and can make children and parents feel defensive and that they have been tarnished with a label that they cannot change. Before formally agreeing that bullying is happening, we may first see evidence of bullying behaviours

where we will work closely with families and children to intervene as quickly as possible to prevent this turning into bullying.

The parents of pupils who display bullying behaviour and their victims will always be informed of bullying incidents. We will agree with them the actions to be taken and will ask them to support any strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The school will remind parents and children that repeated bullying incidents may result in exclusion from school.

Regular, open communication between children, class teachers and families proves to be the most effective way of working as a team to support both the victim and the child displaying bullying behaviours.

Where necessary we have and will call on outside resources such as the Merton Virtual Behaviour Service, Jigsaw4U and the Polka Theatre to support our action.

This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

Further Training and Information

The Anti-Bullying Alliance has many excellent resources and case studies related to anti-bullying in schools www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

For school staff

If you are interested in increasing your understanding of bullying, feel free to access the following training tool

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/schools-and-teachers/free-cpd-online-training>

For parents or carers

If you are interested in learning more about bullying, you can access the **free, interactive online anti-bullying information tool for parents and carers through the Anti-Bullying Alliance**. You can follow the sections that are of particular interest to you or browse the whole site. The site includes information on:

- What bullying is
- Types of bullying
- Fall outs
- Bullying as a group behaviour
- What to do if your child is or you think they are being bullied
- How to respond if you think your child is bullying others
- What schools should and must do about bullying
- Bullying and the Police
- Cyberbullying
- Where parents and carers can get further support and advice

To visit the Information Tool please go to: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/parenttool

APPENDIX 1

WIMBLEDON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Serious Incident Report Form

Section A: Member of staff to complete

Nature of Incident	Bullying/Serious Behaviour (Delete as appropriate)	
Type of Bullying/ Serious behaviour (tick all that apply)	Appearance Class/Socio-economic Home circumstance (e.g. caring role) Ethnicity/Race Religion/Belief Gender Gender identity - transphobic Sexual orientation – homophobic or biphobic Sexualised SEND	Physical Property Verbal Emotional/Psychological Online Other:
Names of Pupil and year group	Person responsible:	Target:
Date		
Details of incident Include details of witnesses and other relevant supporting information (e.g. screen shot) Incidents need to be classified as one of the identified categories. We have a duty to report all bullying incidents to Merton. We need to keep accurate records on all incidents of bullying in school. Serious incidents also include one-off incidents where children behave in a way that causes significant harm or upset to another; or behave in a dangerous or reckless way. Incidents should be factually and objectively recorded.		

Section B: Senior Leader to complete

Incident reported to (Racist and Homophobic incidents to be reported to Merton termly) Report every incident to a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will save the file centrally. The Deputy Head has the responsibility to report relevant incidents to Merton each term.
Action taken Record the agreed outcome including consequences/sanctions, how parents were notified and their responses.

Review

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