

# POLICY

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY





“We all flourish from a wealth of learning experiences that positively impact on our academic, physical and emotional success”

## POLICY DETAILS

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Policy Title:    | <b>ANTI-BULLYING POLICY</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Version:         | 1.0                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Date created:    | Spring 2026                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Purpose:         | To recognise and make everyone aware that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils |
| Approved by EHT: | Spring 2026                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Next Review:     | Spring 2028                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## POLICY HISTORY

| Version: | Date:       | Changes:          |
|----------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1.0      | Spring 2026 | New Policy Format |

## CONTENTS

|     |                              |    |
|-----|------------------------------|----|
| 1.  | INTRODUCTION .....           | 3  |
| 2.  | AIMS AND OBJECTIVES .....    | 3  |
| 3.  | DEFINITION OF BULLYING ..... | 4  |
| 4.  | SIGNS OF BULLYING.....       | 6  |
| 5.  | BULLYING PREVENTION.....     | 6  |
| 6.  | SCHOOL RULES .....           | 7  |
| 7.  | REPORTING TO BULLYING .....  | 7  |
| 8.  | RECORDING TO BULLYING.....   | 8  |
| 9.  | RESPONDING TO BULLYING.....  | 8  |
| 10. | BEHAVIOUR POLICY .....       | 10 |
| 11. | MONITORING AND REVIEW .....  | 10 |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the Horsted School, we are aware that pupils may be bullied in any school or setting, and recognise that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to any cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils.
- 1.2 In line with the Equality Act 2010, it is essential that our school:
- Eliminates 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; and
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 1.3 We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. 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 pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their Local Authority's safeguarding team.
- 1.4 This policy is closely linked with our Behaviour Policy, our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, our School Code of Conduct and the School's Vision, Aims and Values

## 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 We are determined to promote and develop a school ethos where bullying behaviour is regarded as unacceptable, to ensure a safe and secure environment is sustained for all pupils.
- 2.2 We aim to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying. Curriculum time is dedicated to children understanding what good friendships look like and think about the consequences of negative behaviours towards others.
- 2.3 This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- 2.4 We aim to make all those connected with our school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in school.

### 3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

- 3.1 DCSF guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or not spoken to).
- 3.2 At the Bluebell Federation, we discuss what bullying is, as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, with all pupils through assemblies and RSE lessons.
- 3.3 We agree that:
- Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally;
  - Bullying usually happens when the relationship is imbalanced;
  - It could be prejudice-based or discriminatory

### 3.4 TYPES OF BULLYING

#### PHYSICAL BULLYING

- (hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, breaking, damaging or taking property)

#### VERBAL BULLYING

- (name calling, taunts put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, excessive criticism or sarcasm.)

#### EMOTIONAL / PSYCHOLOGICAL

- (rumours or stories, exclusion from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass)

#### CYBER-BULLYING

- The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual bullying', which can occur in and outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen beyond the school day into home and private space, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content.
- We recognise cyberbullying as an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing another bullying behaviour to harass their target. We recognise that cyberbullying can have a particularly negative impact because it can invade home and personal space. There are also challenges for example in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the

profile of the person doing the bullying and their target. Ongoing changes to technology mean the methods used to bully keep evolving.

### **PREJUDICED-BASED BULLYING**

- Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, on the grounds of ethnicity, religion and belief, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. It might be motivated by actual differences, perceived differences or as a result of association with someone else.
- We record these forms of prejudiced based bullying by their type and report on them to the local authority. This is in recognition that these groups are protected by the Equality Act 2010 because of the prejudice experienced by some groups in the wider society. We also recognise that there are others groups of children and young people who may be vulnerable to bullying including children in care, young carers or those with mental health issues. We recognise therefore that we sometimes have to look at develop specific work or practice to prevent bullying of groups of pupils. Some of these methods are listed in section 3.1.

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another. This can relate to

- the size of the individual,
- the strength of the individual
- the numbers or group size involved
- being from a majority rather than a minority group
- anonymity – through the use of cyberbullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

### **3.5 VULNERABLE GROUPS**

We recognise that some groups of pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- Looked After Children
- Children having caring responsibilities
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Children from ethnic minorities
- Children entitled to Free School Meals

- Children for whom English is an Additional Language
- Children who are perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual
- Those suffering from health problems, including mental health

#### 4. SIGNS OF BULLYING

- 4.1 We acknowledge that friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting for both pupils and parents and carers, but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Pupils will fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and have disagreements. This relational conflict can be a normal part of growing up. During a relational conflict or friendship problem groups of pupils may disagree, be very upset and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. It is unlikely however, to be repeated behaviour and may even be accidental, but pupils will make an effort to resolve the problem and will want to resolve the problem.

However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems or relational conflict can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour particularly when there is an imbalance of power [when a group acts against an individual for example].

- 4.2 Staff should be vigilant in looking out for signs of bullying or other child protection issues including:

- Physical: unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes, or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches, bedwetting.
- Emotional: losing interest in school, being withdrawn or secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why unhappy, high level of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, lack of confidence, headaches and stomach aches, signs of depression.
- Behavioural: asking to be taken to school, coming home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asking for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties, truancy.

#### 5. BULLYING PREVENTION

- 5.1 Preventing and raising awareness of bullying is essential in keeping incidents in our school to a minimum.
- Through assemblies, as well as RSE lessons, pupils are given regular opportunities to discuss what bullying is, as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, such as two friends falling out, or a one-off argument.
  - An annual 'Anti-bullying Week' is held to further raise awareness.

- Online Safety is an important part of the Curriculum and information for parents is included in newsletters and on the school's website. Pupils are taught to tell an adult in school if they are concerned that someone is being bullied.
- The School Council provides a forum for discussing any bullying issues and for the pupils to decide ways of preventing it and supporting those who are bullied.
- Staff are used to enable pupils to resolve friendship problems and low-level behaviour without adult intervention.
- Play leaders are used to reduce potential conflict during break-time and lunchtime by providing a rich menu of play possibilities

## 6. SCHOOL RULES

- 6.1 Our School Rules are regularly promoted in assemblies and displayed throughout the school. Through pupils following these rules, and staff reinforcing them, bullying should be significantly reduced.

Horsted School Rules are as follows:

- We listen to each other.
- We follow adult instructions.
- We try our best at all times and look after each other.
- We look after our property and equipment.
- We keep our hands, feet, other objects and hurtful comments to ourselves.
- We are kind and respectful to everyone.
- We walk around quietly and carefully in all areas of the school.

## 7. REPORTING TO BULLYING

- 7.1 Early identification of bullying is the most effective way of minimising bullying behaviour and the effects on the person being bullied. We also acknowledge that the pupil doing the bullying behaviour needs to understand that their behaviour is unacceptable and will need support to change their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for bullying.
- 7.2 Pupils are encouraged to report any harmful or hurtful behaviour, even if they are not sure whether it is bullying. They are encouraged to report for themselves or for their friends. They can do this through:
- Speaking to their class teacher
  - Speaking to another trusted adult in the school community
  - Speaking to a parent/other adult who may then contact the school in any of the ways listed

- Speaking to a friend and asking the friend to help tell an adult
- Calling a confidential helpline such as ChildLine

7.3 Parents and carers **must** inform us if they think or know there is a problem for their own child or for another child. They can do this by speaking to the class teacher or calling the office and asking to speak to a member of SLT.

## 8. RECORDING TO BULLYING

All cases of alleged bullying should be reported to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher or senior member of staff and recorded on CPOMS so that the school can monitor the individual incidents but also monitor incidents across the school. This monitoring will inform the PSHE education curriculum and assemblies.

## 9. RESPONDING TO BULLYING

9.1 All pupils have a role to play to intervene to support their peers (if it is safe to do so) and to report bullying:

- Alert an adult in school to any concerns
- Talk to your friends about the situation
- Above all always tell someone. Adults will usually need to intervene to stop bullying behaviour
- All of us have a responsibility to avoid encouraging or inciting bullying behaviour and to not stand by and let someone else be harmed.

### 9.2 PUPILS - (IF YOU HAVE BEEN BULLIED)

- If you feel able to and it is safe to do so, ask the child showing bullying behaviour to stop, ignore it, say no and walk away
- Try not show you are upset or angry, but remember this is not your fault
- Tell a friend what is happening and ask for their support
- Tell a trusted adult in or out of school (ask a friend to go with you if it helps)
- Do not delete evidence of online bullying as it can be used as evidence
- It is possible the situation will take time to resolve, but unless you tell someone, we cannot help you – and we can make sure you are safe

### 9.3 PARENTS AND CARERS

- Listen and talk to your child about the situation and discuss and agree next steps
- Contact a member of SLT if you are worried or concerned
- Monitor social networks/computer use
- Reinforce the value of good behaviour

## 9.4 SCHOOL STAFF

- Take seriously any report of bullying behaviour
- Record it and report it to a member of SLT
- An appropriate member of staff will then investigate the bullying case and will:
  - Speak with the person targeted for bullying behaviour and involve them in what they would like to happen next
  - Speak to the pupil carrying out the bullying behaviour and find out their perspective
  - Find witnesses to explain what they saw
  - Contact and involve the parents and carers of those targeted and the parents and carers of those doing the bullying behaviour
- We will (age appropriately) challenge the behaviour and ideas of the person doing the bullying and help them to understand that what they said or did was hurtful and not in line with the school's values, ethos or policies
- We will consider the intentions of the perpetrator before helping him or her develop a repair plan
- We will let other pupils that have witnessed the incident know that the behaviour was unacceptable and that it is being dealt with
- We will keep the target of bullying behaviour and their parents and carers informed about progress and any actions taken and a review date
- We will record on CPOMS whether the incident has been resolved and whether the target and their parents or carers are satisfied with the outcome
- We will identify clear times to 'check in' with those involved (and including parents and carers) to ensure issues have been resolved.

Where bullying behaviour is denied and evidence is hard to find, those involved will be closely observed and monitored. Any pupils who feel they are being bullied will be checked in with regularly by a designated adult.

## 9.5 HEAD TEACHER

- Ensure the anti-bullying strategy is implemented and all staff and parents are aware of the policy.
- Reports of bullying and prejudiced based incidents will be made by the Head teacher / Senior Leadership Team to the governing body

- The Head teacher and the governing body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy in discussion with the School Council and the staff in school and will be involved in any unresolved concerns raised by pupils or parents and carers about bullying in the school community.
- The Head teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

## 9.6 GOVERNORS

- Support the Head teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school. The governing body will not condone any bullying and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.
- Monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly

## 10. BEHAVIOUR POLICY

- Our Behaviour Policy includes rewards and sanctions which are used consistently, alongside positive relationships, to prevent inappropriate behaviour, and promote positive behaviour.
- Any consequences given will follow the behaviour policy.

## 11. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 11.1 This policy is monitored regularly by the Head teacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.
- 11.2 The Governing Body review the effectiveness of the Bullying Policy every two years. They do this by examining the school's monitoring record of bullying, where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the Head teacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.
- 11.3 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.