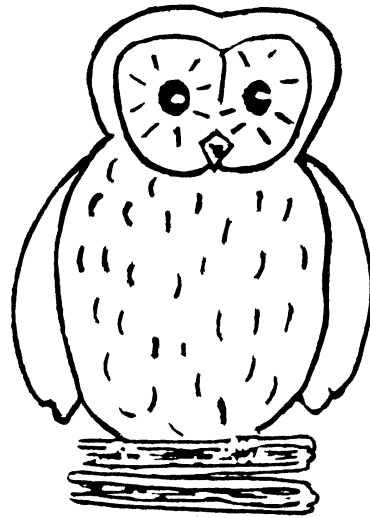


Overstone Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Designated Safeguarding Leaders: Stephen Casey, Dee Dawson, Anuska Lockey

Child Protection Governor: Kathryn Hamilton

Reviewed by TLS Committee: 27th November 2024

Ratified by FGB: 4th December 2024

For review: November 2025

At Overstone Primary School we have a clear understanding of how children learn and continually strive to provide the best possible conditions to facilitate this. We acknowledge that we live in a changing world and that we need to prepare our children for tomorrow's needs. Consequently we not only place value on the key skills of reading, writing, oral communication and mathematical understanding, but also on developing skills for life in modern Britain. We aim to deliver a world class curriculum that will challenge and inspire all our pupils and prepare them for the future.

We have three overall aims:

That pupils will become:

- Successful learners who achieve and enjoy learning
- Confident individuals who can live safe and healthy lives
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well being

The atmosphere we have at Overstone Primary School is characterised by kindness, friendliness and tolerance. In this caring environment there is provision for non-threatening challenges, respect for each other and an atmosphere where children feel safe and able to make their own contributions. Bullying is not able or allowed to thrive in such an environment. Effective systems and practices prevent incidents of bullying happening.

The aims of this Anti-Bullying Policy are:

1. To ensure that all pupils, staff, parents and Governors fully understand that bullying is viewed very seriously and that everyone has their part to play.
2. To be assured that the school will deal effectively with bullying as it occurs.
3. To ensure that the school will provide support to both bullies and victims.
4. To ensure that there is a common understanding of what is meant by bullying.

“Bullying in any form is always unacceptable.”

What is Bullying?

“Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”.
(DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” 2014)

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as *“the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another where the relationship involves an imbalance of power”.*

Staff and Governors at Overstone Primary School accept the definition:

“Bullying is persistent behaviour by an individual or group which knowingly, deliberately and systematically causes/seeks to cause, or encourages others to cause, pain, distress, anxiety or fear to another individual or group whether physically, verbally or emotionally.”

All bullying is “emotional” and plays on weakness: the imbalance of power. Bullying can be **REPEATED** deliberate acts done to cause distress. Bullying behaviour is carried out to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully / bullies. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, or any use of violence.
- **Racist:** racial name calling, graffiti, unacceptable gestures.
- **Verbal:** name calling, spreading rumours, teasing.
- **Sexual:** unwanted sexual contact, sexually abusive behaviour or comments.
- **Cyber/Online:** threats by text message, email misuse, social media. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like mobile phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media forums. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour.

Examples of cyberbullying or online bullying include:

- Text messages or emails that are derogatory and / or abusive;
- Rumours sent by email or posts on social media sites, such as chatrooms, Facebook, Twitter or Snap Chat;
- Publication of embarrassing pictures or video clips on social media; Publication of fake profiles on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. We teach children about this.

At Overstone Primary School, we understand that some pupils can be particularly vulnerable to bullying because of “differences,” real or perceived, that make them vulnerable. This is supported through Pastoral Support as well as the daily interventions happening within school. Real or perceived differences can relate to:

- Appearance
- Ability
- Health
- Family or home circumstances, e.g. looked after children or young carers
- Social class
- Race, religion or culture
- Disability / Special Educational Needs
- Sexual Orientation of either the pupil or members of their family
- Gender

The Equality Act became law in 2010. It covers everyone in Britain and protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Everyone in Britain is protected. This is because the Equality Act protects people against discrimination because of the protected characteristics that we all have. Under the Equality Act, there are nine Protected Characteristics:

Age
 Disability
 Gender reassignment
 Race
 Religion or belief
 Marriage or civil partnership
 Sex

Sexual orientation
Pregnancy and maternity

At Overstone Primary School we ensure an understanding of these through our teaching of our PSHE curriculum. Protective characteristics and the teaching of respect for difference is prevalent throughout the SCARF PSHE curriculum used across the school.

Effects of Bullying

Bullying can affect pupils in a number of different ways. When pupils are bullied, their lives are made miserable; they may suffer injury or feel unhappy about coming to school. Over time, they may lose self-confidence and self-esteem, often blaming themselves for inviting bullying behaviour.

What do we do as a school when bullying takes place?

Parents can be assured that the school takes all reports of bullying very seriously. Our priority will be to support those being bullied and to stop the bullying. It is the school's responsibility to assess the seriousness of the bullying and to determine the appropriate action that should be taken.

We will work to help and support those responsible for the bullying to understand the impact of bullying and to change their behaviour. We have to assess the seriousness by asking key questions such as:

- Was the act done on purpose knowing it would hurt?
- What was the actual hurt suffered?
- How many times has the bullying taken place?
- How long has the bullying been going on?
- Have those involved also bullied other pupils?
- Was there any provocation?

What do we do as a school to prevent bullying?

We want all our pupils to understand the nature of bullying and the effects it has. We want children to know that bullying in any form is not acceptable, and that they must report it immediately if they or anyone else is being bullied. We want them to know that it is not acceptable for anyone to encourage bullying by others and not acceptable to do nothing if they know it is taking place. In school we work hard to prevent bullying taking place.

Some of the ways we do this are:

- Using assemblies to talk about bullying and give out key messages.
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying Week.
- Constantly reviewing all behaviour incidents. This includes bullying type behaviours.
- Ensuring that there are clear links between personal, social and health education, citizenship, religious education and other curriculum areas so that all pupils are able to extend and apply their learning in all subjects.
- School, classroom and playground rules make clear the behaviour we expect. Our use of rewards and sanctions reflects this.
- Supervision by staff in classrooms and outside at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Adults modelling language and behaviours for children to follow and learn from.

Roles and Responsibilities

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Pupils, parents, carers and all staff at Overstone Primary take a shared responsibility for promoting good behaviour.

What is my responsibility as a pupil at Overstone Primary School?

- I will follow the school rules and expectations
- I will be polite, well behaved and courteous.
- I will follow the behaviour policy and take part in making decisions on it.
- I will talk to someone if I feel worried, upset or concerned about anything.
- I understand that if I am involved in bullying or witnessing bullying without reporting the incident, it could lead to serious action.
- I will treat everyone at our school with respect.
- I will take responsibility for my own actions.

What are my responsibilities as a parent/carer?

- I understand all parents, visitors and staff of Overstone Primary School should feel valued and safe.
- I will support my child to participate in the life of the school and actively encourage my child with their learning.
- I will support my child to the best of my ability to follow and respect the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies.
- I will report any of my worries or concerns to the school following the correct channels, e.g. informing the class teacher or a member of SLT, who will then record the concern and agree actions.

Actions school will take

Low level bullying or unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with quickly and sensitively by the member of staff immediately involved.

On every occasion, the member of staff will talk with all involved to understand what has happened and then with those responsible for the bullying to give the "evidence" of distress/hurt and to reinforce the view that bullying and unkind behaviour is unacceptable.

Pupil statements will be taken and witness statements may also be needed to verify what has taken place. If bullying is suspected, it will be reported to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher for further investigation and if the incident is confirmed as 'bullying', a formal entry will be made in the bullying log which is in a black folder in the headteacher's office.

Sanctions will be in line with the school's behaviour policy and parents will be informed as appropriate and provided with regular feedback. A formal record of the incident will be made. The school will determine the appropriate action to be taken.

Those responsible will be expected to make a response to the victim in form of an apology and in seeking to improve the relationship. Those being bullied will be told to talk with an adult to report immediately if anything happens again.

Consideration will be made as to any additional support needed to prevent further bullying, including support to develop protective skills for those bullied and help to change the behaviour of those bullying. A decision will be made about referral to and involvement of specialist external support services.

The Governing Body will monitor this policy's effectiveness through the Headteacher's Report. They will take into account comments from parents, other professionals and their own perceptions when visiting school.

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