

Anti-Bullying Policy



Approved by:	Jonathan Mason	Date: February 2019
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

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1 Purpose and scope

Belton Lane Primary School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which every pupil can learn and flourish. Bullying in any form is unacceptable. This policy explains how we prevent bullying, how pupils and adults can report concerns, and how the school will respond, record, monitor and review incidents.

This policy applies to all pupils and to behaviour in school, during school activities, on journeys, online and outside school where the behaviour affects pupils, relationships or the orderly running of the school. It should be read alongside the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Equality Policy, SEND Policy, RSHE Policy and Complaints Procedure.

2 Legal and national guidance

This policy has regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, including the guidance on child-on-child abuse and safeguarding concerns that occur inside or outside school and online
- the Department for Education guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying, updated 2026

- the Education and Inspections Act 2006, including the duty to encourage good behaviour and prevent bullying
- the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- the Human Rights Act 1998, the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004
- the statutory guidance on relationships education and health education

3 Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally and may involve an imbalance of power. The imbalance may be physical, social, psychological, technological or connected to status, popularity, knowledge or access to a group.

A single incident may not meet the school definition of bullying because it is not repeated. This does not make the behaviour acceptable or insignificant. Serious one-off incidents, including discriminatory, sexual or violent behaviour, may be safeguarding concerns and will be addressed under the appropriate school policy.

The school distinguishes bullying from occasional conflict, friendship difficulties or unkind behaviour by considering repetition, intention, impact and any imbalance of power. All harmful behaviour will be addressed, whether or not it meets the definition of bullying.

4 Forms of bullying

- Physical: hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or damaging belongings, intimidation or unwanted physical contact.
- Verbal: name-calling, threats, taunts, insults, offensive comments or repeated teasing.
- Relational or social: deliberate exclusion, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships, humiliation or encouraging others to isolate a pupil.
- Online or cyberbullying: harmful messages, posts, images, videos, impersonation, exclusion from online groups or misuse of games, apps, social media or devices.
- Prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying: behaviour connected to actual or perceived race, faith, religion or belief, disability, special educational needs, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or another protected characteristic.
- Bullying connected to appearance, health, family circumstances, care experience, adoption, young carer status, poverty or any other real or perceived difference.
- Sexual bullying: sexual comments, jokes, rumours, unwanted conduct, harassment or pressure. These behaviours will also be considered under safeguarding procedures.

The school does not dismiss harmful or discriminatory language as banter, a joke or part of growing up. Racism, faith-targeted abuse and other discriminatory behaviour can significantly affect a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety and will be considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

5 Bullying and safeguarding

Bullying may form part of child-on-child abuse. It can happen between children of any age or sex, individually or in groups, inside or outside school and online. Staff must remain alert even when there are no reported incidents, because children may be unable, afraid or unsure how to tell an adult.

Any member of staff who believes that bullying may constitute abuse, indicate significant harm or create an immediate risk must follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and report the concern

promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Immediate safety comes first. Staff must not promise confidentiality.

Sexual violence, sexual harassment, sharing nude or semi-nude images, coercion, hate incidents, threats, serious violence, exploitation or possible criminal behaviour will be managed through safeguarding procedures and referred to children's social care or the police where appropriate. The school will make decisions on a case-by-case basis and will not use mediation or restorative approaches where these could place a child at further risk.

6 Prevention

We seek to prevent bullying by creating a culture in which difference is respected, harmful language is challenged and pupils know that adults will listen and act. The school will:

- teach respectful relationships, consent, online safety, equality and how to seek help through an age-appropriate curriculum
- make reporting routes clear and accessible, including for pupils with SEND or communication needs
- provide suitable supervision and review locations or times where incidents are more likely to occur
- train staff to recognise bullying, discriminatory behaviour and child-on-child abuse and to respond consistently
- use assemblies, class work and national initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week and Safer Internet Day
- work with pupils, parents, governors and external agencies to improve practice
- analyse records for patterns involving pupils, groups, protected characteristics, locations, times and online platforms

7 How pupils can report bullying

A pupil can speak to any trusted adult, including their class teacher, teaching assistant, midday supervisor, pastoral staff, the Headteacher or another member of staff. A pupil may also ask a friend or parent to help them report, or use any pupil reporting system provided by the school. Staff will make reasonable adjustments so that pupils with SEND or communication needs can report safely.

Pupils should report concerns about themselves or another child. They will be listened to, taken seriously and told what will happen next. The school cannot promise to keep information secret, but it will share information only with people who need it to help keep children safe.

8 How parents and carers can report concerns

Parents and carers should contact the class teacher in the first instance, unless the concern is serious or safeguarding-related, when they should contact the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. Reports should include what happened, when and where it happened, who was involved, any witnesses and relevant screenshots or messages. Parents should avoid confronting another child or family directly.

If a parent remains dissatisfied with the school's response, they may use the school's Complaints Procedure. Safeguarding concerns will continue to be managed through safeguarding procedures and are not delayed by a complaint.

9 Staff response and investigation

When a concern is reported, staff will:

1. listen calmly and record the child's account in their own words, without leading questions
2. check immediate safety and provide reassurance and appropriate support
3. inform the relevant senior leader and the Designated Safeguarding Lead where the safeguarding threshold may be met
4. gather information fairly from the children involved and any witnesses, preserving relevant online evidence
5. consider repetition, intention, impact, power imbalance, vulnerability, SEND, protected characteristics and any wider pattern
6. inform parents and carers as appropriate, unless doing so may place a child at risk or conflict with safeguarding advice
7. agree actions, support and review arrangements and communicate these to those who need to know
8. record the incident, decisions, rationale, actions and outcomes on the school's agreed system

The wishes and feelings of the child who has experienced the behaviour will be considered, but they will not determine whether safeguarding action is necessary. Children will not be required to meet face-to-face or apologise as part of a restorative process unless this is safe, appropriate and genuinely voluntary.

10 Support and action

Support for the pupil who has experienced bullying

- a named adult and regular check-ins
- a safety or support plan where needed
- pastoral, SEND or external-agency support
- help to restore confidence, friendships and access to learning
- practical online-safety support, including preserving evidence and reporting content
- review meetings to confirm that the behaviour has stopped and there is no retaliation and that the pupil's wellbeing, attendance and access to learning have not been adversely affected

Support and consequences for the pupil displaying bullying behaviour

The response will be proportionate, consistent with the Behaviour Policy and informed by safeguarding needs. It may include explicit teaching, parental involvement, increased supervision, loss of privileges, restorative work where safe, pastoral or SEND support, risk assessment, suspension or permanent exclusion in the most serious cases. Support does not remove accountability. The school will consider whether the child displaying the behaviour may also be experiencing harm or unmet need.

Bystanders and witnesses

Pupils who witness bullying will be encouraged to report it, avoid sharing harmful content and offer safe support. They may also need reassurance or pastoral support. Retaliation against a person who reports a concern will be treated seriously.

11 Online and off-site behaviour

The school may respond to bullying outside school, including online behaviour, where it affects a pupil's wellbeing, relationships in school, the school community or the orderly running of the school. Staff will advise families about blocking, reporting and preserving evidence. The school may work with the police, children's social care, platform providers or other agencies where appropriate.

12 Recording confidentiality and information sharing

Records will distinguish alleged, substantiated and unsubstantiated concerns and will include the nature of the incident, any discriminatory element, safeguarding decisions, action taken, support offered and review outcome. Records will be stored securely and handled in accordance with data protection requirements. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis to protect children and support an effective response. Parents and carers will be informed about the action taken to safeguard and support their own child, but the school will not normally disclose confidential information about sanctions, safeguarding arrangements or support relating to another pupil.

13 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing Body	Approves the policy, holds leaders to account and receives anonymised information about trends, actions and impact.
Headteacher	Leads implementation, ensures a consistent response and reports patterns and significant issues to governors.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Advises on safeguarding thresholds, referrals, risk and support, and ensures links with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
All staff	Model respectful behaviour, challenge harmful language, respond promptly, record concerns and report safeguarding issues.
Pupils	Treat others respectfully, report concerns and avoid joining in, forwarding or sharing harmful content.
Parents and carers	Report concerns promptly, preserve relevant evidence, work with the school and avoid direct confrontation with other families.

14 Monitoring and review

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead will review individual cases and analyse records at least termly for patterns and repeat concerns. Appropriate anonymised information will be reported to governors. The school will seek pupil and parent views where helpful and will evaluate whether actions have stopped the behaviour and restored safety. This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance or school circumstances change.

15 Useful support

Anti-Bullying Alliance: anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk | Childline: childline.org.uk or 0800 1111 | NSPCC: nspcc.org.uk | Childnet: childnet.com | CEOP Education: ceopeducation.co.uk | Kidscape: kidscape.org.uk