

Anti-Bullying Policy

Meanwood CE Primary School



Approved by:	Jamie Chapman	Date: 01.09.27
Last reviewed on:	01.09.26	
Next review due by:	01.09.27	

1. Our Vision, Values, and Ethos

Our school's anti-bullying framework is built upon our central Christian vision:

“Every person is valued, nurtured and empowered to achieve their full potential.”

This vision is underpinned by Jesus' commandment to *“love one another as I have loved you”* (John 15:12). We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people, expecting all staff, volunteers, and the wider community to share this commitment. We believe that everyone in our school community has the right to be treated with respect and dignity, enjoying fair and equal opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, cultural background, faith, sexuality, or disability. The school will provide an inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of all its pupils.

Our daily work to prevent and resolve bullying is guided by our three core values

- **Open Hearts:** We actively listen to those who are hurting. We encourage children to ask, “How can I make things better?” when harm has occurred. We show positive regard for all, ensuring no child feels isolated.
- **Open Minds:** We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication or a response to unmet needs and trauma. We remain calm, avoid shaming, and support children to learn from their mistakes and start again.
- **Open Arms:** We welcome everyone, saying “Come and join in”. We celebrate difference and diversity, and we actively work to rebuild and restore relationships when they break down.

2. Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to highlight that we:

- Ensure all governors, staff, pupils, and parents share a common, clear understanding of what bullying is.
- Take all incidences of bullying seriously, maintaining a consistent, relational approach to all incidents so everyone knows what to do when bullying arises.
- Recognise our duty as a whole school community to take measures to prevent and tackle any bullying, harassment, or discrimination, ensuring it will not be tolerated.
- Actively promote values of respect and equality, working to ensure that difference and diversity are celebrated across the whole school community.
- Recognise that all children can need help with their social, emotional, and mental health, and that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are particularly vulnerable to bullying, ensuring they receive targeted, proactive support.
- Assure pupils and parents that they will be met with Open Hearts and fully supported when bullying is reported.

3. What is Bullying?

In line with our Relational Culture and Behaviour Policy, bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen anywhere, at school, at home, or online, and requires joint working between school and home both proactively and to respond to harm.

Bullying behaviour usually has the following four features:

- **It is repetitive and persistent:** repeated over a sustained period of time.
- **It is intentionally harmful:** deliberately hurtful, targeted, and intentional.
- **It involves an imbalance of power:** leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent or stop it.
- **It causes distress:** creating deep feelings of distress, fear, loneliness, and a lack of confidence in those at the receiving end.

Types of Bullying

These behaviours run entirely contrary to our CARE values and include:

- **Emotional:** Causing harm and distress to their emotional wellbeing, both directly and indirectly (e.g., being unfriendly, excluding/leaving people out, tormenting, humiliation, mocking, intimidation).
- **Physical:** Causing physical harm to another (e.g., pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, or use of any violence, deliberately bumping into someone, biting, spitting, nipping, or pinching, fighting, or damaging/taking belongings).
- **Prejudice-based and discriminatory:** Any form of discrimination against a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 (e.g., racist taunts, graffiti, homophobic or transphobic bullying focusing on sexuality or gender identity, sexist comments, or targeting a disability/special educational need).
- **Sexual:** Sexualised behaviours, unwanted physical contact, or sexually abusive comments that cause distress and devastation to an individual.
- **Cyber-bullying:** Bullying that takes place online or through any form of messaging. This includes direct and indirect messaging, social media harassment, and acting as a bystander in an online group. In line with statutory guidelines, this also encompasses using online spaces to spread disinformation, misinformation, or conspiracy theories designed to target, isolate, or demean others.
- **Child-on-Child Abuse:** We recognise that bullying is a key form of child-on-child abuse. This includes physical/emotional bullying, cyber-bullying, sexual harassment, harmful sexualised behaviours, youth-produced sexual imagery, and abuse within intimate partner relationships. All such incidents are treated as safeguarding concerns in line with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

4. Procedures and Relational Responses to Harm

At Meanwood, we believe that **punitive consequences do not have a lasting impact on improving behaviour**. Negative, punitive responses to behaviour cause shame, stress, and anxiety. They do not improve understanding or help to create a harmonious culture within our school. When bullying is suspected, reported, or witnessed, we respond with **Open Minds** and **Open Hearts**, focusing on resolving the conflict, stopping the harm, and repairing the relationship.

Immediate Action and Reporting Steps

If bullying is suspected or reported, the school will implement the following procedures immediately:

1. The incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached, ensuring that the person being bullied is safe.
2. In cases of serious bullying, a clear account will be recorded and given to the Headteacher. The Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will interview all concerned and record the incident on CPOMS.
3. Class teachers of all involved children will be kept fully informed to maintain daily vigilance and ensure a supportive environment.
4. Staff will seek to understand the children's behaviours and needs, investigating any underlying safeguarding concerns or trauma responses that may be driving the behaviour, in accordance with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
5. Measures will be administered in line with our Relational Culture and Behaviour Policy, which recognises that restorative approaches require educator discretion and that no two responses to harm look exactly the same.
6. In serious cases, parents will be informed and invited into school to discuss the problem and establish a supportive partnership. If necessary and appropriate, outside agencies, the local authority, or the police will be consulted.

Supporting the Pupil Who Has Been Targeted

Pupils who have been targeted by bullying will be supported with Open Arms by:

- **Offering immediate opportunities:** to discuss the experience with a trusted member of staff in a safe, non-judgmental space.
- **Reassurance:** and clear explanation as to why the actions of the perpetrator were wrong, validating their feelings and ensuring they do not blame themselves.
- **Continuous support:** and regular follow-ups by class teachers and pastoral staff to check that the bullying has not restarted and that they feel safe.
- **Restoring self-esteem and confidence:** using positive relationships, circles, and befriending strategies (including buddies) to rebuild their sense of belonging.

Helping the Pupil Who Has Initiated Bullying

In line with our restorative principles, pupils who have bullied others will be supported to change their behaviour by:

- **Discussing what happened:** calmly, helping them establish the wrongdoing without shame or punitive condemnation.
- **Discovering why:** the pupil became involved, identifying any underlying social, emotional, mental health, or trauma-related needs.
- **Helping the child to change:** their behaviour in the future, providing individualised mentoring and positive frameworks to repair the harm.
- **Informing parents:** and actively encouraging them to work with the school showing mutual trust, helping their child move forward.
- **Proportionate Interventions:** Consistent acts of bullying are addressed through Step 2 lunchtime restorative sessions with an SLT member. This provides structured individual reflection time and collaborative discussion to help them actively repair the harm.

5. Proactive Strategies & Building a Relational Culture

At Meanwood, we actively promote values of respect, equality, and co-operation to prevent bullying before it starts. Our values are woven throughout our daily routines, collective worships, and school council meetings.

Key strategies to reduce bullying include:

- **The Everyday Curriculum:** PSHE sessions and assemblies are used to raise awareness about bullying, cyberbullying, and our relational ethos, teaching pupils how to constructively manage relationships.
- **Encouraging Co-operative Working:** Structuring shared learning tasks that foster empathy, collaboration, and mutual respect among pupils.
- **Restorative Circles:** Creating regular, safe circle-time spaces within classrooms to explore relationship issues, air worries, and address conflicts early.
- **Support to Develop Emotional Wellbeing:** Structuring adult-led mediation to promote co-existence, building positive relationships around vulnerable pupils, and using peer-support networks (such as Buddies).
- **Individual Mentoring:** Deploying our Learning Mentor to work with pupils on tailored individual programmes (e.g., addressing anger management or social communication needs).
- **Proactive Digital Monitoring:** Maintaining clear and strict monitoring of school technology alongside digital citizenship lessons to actively prevent cyberbullying.

Positive Reinforcement via CARE Points

We reinforce positive, inclusive behaviour by awarding **CARE points** linked directly to our vision. These points celebrate actions that build up our school community:

- **Open Hearts CARE points:** Awarded for showing empathy, helping others, and demonstrating a sincere restorative apology ("How can I make things better?").
- **Open Minds CARE points:** Awarded for resilience, remaining calm under pressure, and acting positively on advice.
- **Open Arms CARE points:** Awarded for active inclusion ("Come and join in"), appreciating others' ideas, and celebrating differences.

6. Working in Partnership with Parents

We recognize that addressing bullying effectively requires a strong, trust-based partnership between home and school. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive, empathetic member of the school community.

What Parents Should Do If They Have a Concern

If you suspect your child is being bullied, or is involved in bullying, please follow these steps:

- **First Contact:** Contact your child's class teacher immediately. They are best contacted after school, by emailing admin@meanwood.leeds.sch.uk or telephoning 0113 2755883 to arrange a meeting.
- **Be Specific:** Help us understand the situation by being as detailed as possible. Provide dates, times, places, and names of other pupils involved, keeping in mind that the teacher may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- **Collaborate:** Ask what steps we can take together to support your child, and make a note of the action the school intends to take to resolve the issue relationally.
- **Stay in Touch:** Maintain regular communication with the school. Let us know if things improve, as well as if any difficulties continue.
- **Escalation:** If you feel your concerns are not being appropriately addressed, check our agreed procedures. You can arrange a formal meeting with the Headteacher, write to the Chair of Governors, or seek support from the Local Authority through Children's Services.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults across the school community should remain vigilant and investigate if a child shows any of the following signs or behaviours:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school, or begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine, is unwilling to go to school, or begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, nervous, jumpy, or lacks in confidence
- Cries themselves to sleep at night, has nightmares, or feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork performance
- Comes home with clothes torn, books damaged, or possessions which 'go missing'
- Asks for money, starts stealing money, or has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable, or is bullying siblings/other children
- Stops eating, starts stammering, or is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above, or is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

These signs and behaviours could indicate other underlying problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and must be investigated in a safeguarding and relational context.

Appendix 2: Information for Children – Our Open Arms Guide

At Meanwood CE Primary, our arms, our minds, and our hearts are always open to you. Bullying is not allowed, and you do not have to put up with it.

Are you being bullied?

Bullying is if you feel hurt because individuals or groups are repeatedly and on purpose:

- Calling you names, threatening you, or spreading rumours about you or your family
- Hitting, pushing, or hurting you physically
- Damaging your possessions, or pressuring you to give away money or things
- Using text, email, or web spaces to say hurtful things (cyberbullying)
- Targeting you because of your ethnic background, religious faith, SEND, gender, sexuality, appearance, or issues in your family

What should you do?

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye, use your Open Arms to say “stop”, and stand up to them.
- Get away from the situation as soon as possible.
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away (a teacher, teaching assistant, or your family). If you feel uncomfortable talking, write it down on paper and give it to them.

- If you are scared to tell an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you. Keep speaking until someone listens and does something.
- Don't blame yourself, don't keep quiet, and don't try to sort it out yourself by lashing out.
- If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at home or school, ring ChildLine free on 0800 1111.

Appendix 3: Information for Parents – Restorative Partnerships

What is Bullying?

Bullying involves individuals or groups repeatedly calling your child names, threatening, hitting, or spreading rumours about them, damaging their possessions, or using digital tools to write hurtful things. It also includes any targeting of their ethnic background, religious faith, gender, sexuality, disability, special educational need, appearance, or family situation.

Our Commitment to You

Meanwood CE Primary School does not tolerate bullying. When an issue arises, we commit to:

- Listening with Open Hearts and working immediately to make sure that the person being bullied is safe.
- Working proactively and restoratively to stop the bullying behavior from happening again.
- Providing continuous support to help the targeted pupil rebuild their self-esteem and confidence.
- Taking direct relational actions to ensure that the child who has bullied understands the impact of their actions, establishes the wrongdoing, and learns how to repair the harm.

How You Can Partner With Us

We ask parents to support our relational approach by:

- Reassuring your child that telling you was the right thing to do, and keeping a specific record of dates, times, and names.
- Encouraging your child not to retaliate or lash out, which can escalate the harm.
- Working with the school in mutual trust so we can support your child's emotional wellbeing and find a lasting, restorative solution together.