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## Policy Statement

The community of Kingswood Primary School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment- free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are also part of the school's Behaviour policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at our school, as defined below.

## Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental Health and Wellbeing Provision in Schools'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025'

## Definitions

- For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:
  - **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
  - **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
  - **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
  - **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQIA+, or perceived to be LGBTQIA+.
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils.
- Pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

### **Types of Bullying / Hate Crimes**

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

**Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

**Homophobic and biphobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

**Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

**Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

**Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

**Ableist bullying:** Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

**Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

**Relational bullying:** Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

**Socioeconomic bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

### **Actions NOT considered bullying:**

- Occasionally not liking someone so not wanting to be their friend.
- Being excluded from a game e.g. at lunchtime.
- Accidentally bumping into someone and injuring them unintentionally.
- A single act of unkindness.
- Not being listened to or having a difference of opinion.
- An argument.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training / updates for staff members.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Knowing our children well, forming good relationships so children can go to a trusted adult when concerned.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the pupil's heads of year of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.
- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing their child's teacher if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from unwanted situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff or their parents/ carers should they fall victim to cyberbullying.
- Understanding the difference between bullying and pupils just being unkind.

## **Prevention**

We use a variety of methods to support children in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying.

The curriculum will explore and discuss issues at age-appropriate stages such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.

- Harmful sexual behaviour, the concepts involved and why they are always unacceptable, and the laws relating to it.

Further support will be through:

- School assemblies.
- School Council discussions.
- Small social skills groups e.g. with an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA).
- The implementation of whole school Rewards and Sanctions.
- The Year 6/ Reception pupil buddy system.
- Anti-bullying week and continued focus throughout the year.
- Talks and support from outside agencies e.g. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

All children and parents should feel confident that the issue or concern will be dealt with in a non-confrontational way and fairly. They are encouraged to talk to the class teacher if their child experiences any form of bullying.

School staff will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour. They will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

### **Signs of Bullying and Hate Crimes**

All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional and physical stress. Each child's response to being bullied is unique. There is also a wider invisible impact on those that share an identity with a victim, even if they themselves may not have been targeted.

Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Depression and anxiety.
- Increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem and loneliness.
- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy.
- Unexplainable injuries.
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery.
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness.
- Persistent absences.
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Children may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They think it's fun, or that it makes them popular.
- They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all the time.
- They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group.
- They are fearful of other children's differences.
- They are jealous of another child.
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.

- Them not understanding pressures that an individual is under e.g. a young carer / child in foster care.

A hate crime is defined as 'Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.'

Hate crime can fall into one of three main types: physical assault, verbal abuse and incitement to hatred.

### **Staff Principles**

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision. Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.

Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless the pupil has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

### **Child-on-child Abuse**

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons.

All staff will:

- Be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.
- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- Never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up", and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as "boys being boys", as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.
- Be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.
- Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching.

Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is

at risk of harm, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care Services (CSCS) and potentially the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

All staff will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that pupils may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Pupils being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened. The school's Safeguarding Policy outlines the school's stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories. Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Snapchat / Instagram.

The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of pupils staying safe online, and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

Staff and pupils will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. taking screenshots. Staff will report incidents to the headteacher for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Pupils will report incidents to a trusted member of staff or parent/carer.

Where offensive content is posted online, targeting a staff member or pupil, the person targeted will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal. Where the person who has posted it is known to the school, the headteacher will request they remove it directly.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011 Section 2(4), the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so.

This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

### **Procedures**

The procedure for reporting and dealing with incidents of bullying is as follows:

All staff note any incidents and report them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on Child Protection Online Management Service (CPOMS). The victim and the perpetrator will be spoken to on separate occasions by the Headteacher. If deemed serious in nature, the issue is then reported to the parents concerned. All adults and children involved will contribute to the evidence. As a result, the children will be monitored closely by all staff. If the incidents links to lunch or break times, then the perpetrator may be excluded from an activity or the playground, or allowed with close adult supervision. In some circumstances, the perpetrator will be given an internal lunch-time exclusion. Parents will be kept informed of any recurring incidents.

Where actions that have been put in place (as outlined above) have not had the desired effect on the perpetrator, suspension or exclusion will be considered.

### **Linked Policies**

Acceptable Use (Including Online Safety)

Behaviour

Equality

Relationships and Sex Education

Safeguarding

SEND