Bushfield Road Infant School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy date: November 2026
Review date: November 2027
Approved by: Governing body

This policy applies to all pupils at Bushfield Road Infant School. It covers behaviour in school, on educational visits and, where it affects pupils' safety or wellbeing or the orderly running of the school, behaviour outside school, including online behaviour.

It should be read alongside the school's behaviour, safeguarding and child protection, SEND and inclusion, online safety and complaints policies.

Our commitment

At Bushfield, our values are **Kindness, Teamwork and Curiosity**. Every pupil has the right to feel safe, valued and able to learn. Bullying is not acceptable and will not be dismissed as "just a joke", "banter" or a normal part of growing up.

Pupils are very young and still learning how to manage feelings, friendships and disagreements. Adults will respond in a way that is calm, fair and suited to each pupil's age and understanding. We will help pupils learn better ways to behave, while taking seriously the impact of harmful behaviour on the pupil affected.

What bullying means

Bullying is behaviour that is intended to hurt someone and happens repeatedly over time. It can involve a real or perceived imbalance of power, making it difficult for the pupil affected to stop it or feel safe.

Bullying can be:

- physical, such as hitting, kicking, pushing or deliberately damaging belongings;
- verbal, such as repeated name-calling, threats or hurtful comments;
- social, such as repeatedly excluding someone, encouraging others not to play with them or spreading hurtful stories;
- discriminatory, including behaviour linked to disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other characteristics;
- online, such as repeated hurtful messages, sharing images to upset someone or encouraging others to target them.

A single incident may not meet this definition of bullying, but it can still be harmful and must be addressed. Staff will consider what happened, whether there is a repeated pattern, the impact on the pupil and whether anyone feels unsafe. They will not wait for repeated incidents before acting to protect a pupil.

Everyday disagreements, accidental hurt and friendship difficulties are not automatically bullying. Adults will help pupils resolve these fairly and will look carefully for repeated or targeted behaviour.

Preventing bullying

We aim to prevent bullying by teaching and modelling kindness, safe play and respectful relationships throughout the school day. Staff will:

- teach pupils how to join in, take turns, listen, share, say “stop”, ask for help and resolve simple disagreements;
- use clear, consistent language about kind and unkind behaviour;
- notice friendship difficulties and changes in a pupil’s behaviour, attendance or willingness to join in;
- supervise play and less structured times attentively, and help pupils who are finding it difficult to join in safely;
- teach pupils to tell a trusted adult if they or another pupil are being hurt or made to feel unsafe.

Pupils may not use the word *bullying*. Staff will listen carefully to what they say and to what their behaviour may be communicating.

If a pupil reports bullying or harmful behaviour

Any pupil can tell an adult. Parents and carers can raise a concern with their child’s class teacher or a senior leader.

Staff will:

1. **Listen and reassure.** Take the pupil seriously, thank them for telling an adult and explain that the school will help. Do not promise to keep the information secret.
2. **Establish immediate safety.** Check whether the pupil is safe, whether anyone needs medical attention and whether pupils need to be separated or more closely supervised.
3. **Record and report.** Make a clear, factual record of what was said, what staff observed and what action was taken. Pass safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy without delay.
4. **Find out what happened.** Speak to pupils separately where appropriate, using simple, age-appropriate questions. Avoid leading questions and do not require pupils to confront each other or take part in mediation where this could make them feel unsafe.
5. **Decide and act.** Consider the evidence, impact, any repeated pattern, pupils' ages and understanding, relevant needs and any previous concerns. Agree steps to protect the pupil affected and address the behaviour.
6. **Follow up.** Check that the behaviour has stopped and that the pupil affected feels safe. Record the outcome and any further action.

Staff should not label a pupil as a "bully". They should describe the behaviour, its impact and what needs to change.

Supporting pupils and responding to bullying

The school will take prompt and proportionate action. Depending on the circumstances, this may include:

- increasing adult supervision or changing arrangements to keep pupils safe;
- speaking with pupils separately and helping them understand the impact of their actions;
- applying an appropriate consequence in line with the Behaviour Policy;
- teaching and practising safer ways to communicate, play or resolve disagreements;
- working with parents or carers to agree consistent support;
- making an individual support plan or seeking advice from the SENDCo, DSL or relevant professionals.

Where appropriate, pupils will be supported to repair harm. This does not replace a consequence or mean that the pupil affected must accept an apology, meet with another pupil or take part in restorative work.

Staff will consider whether SEND, disability, communication needs, age, developmental stage or other circumstances affect how a pupil understands or responds to a situation. Support and reasonable adjustments will be considered, while ensuring that harmful behaviour is addressed and other pupils are protected.

Discriminatory, sexual or safeguarding concerns

Bullying or harmful behaviour involving discriminatory language, sexualised behaviour, threats, physical harm, online abuse or other safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSL or deputy without delay and managed under the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures. Staff should not treat a safeguarding concern solely as a behaviour issue.

Where appropriate, the school will make referrals or seek advice through established safeguarding procedures. Staff must not delay reporting a concern while trying to resolve it informally.

Parents and carers

The school will contact parents or carers when a concern is being investigated or where action is needed to support a pupil's safety or behaviour. Information will be shared sensitively, respecting the privacy of all pupils involved.

Parents and carers should contact the class teacher or a senior leader promptly if they are concerned their child is being bullied or is causing harm to another pupil. The school will listen, explain what action it can take and keep them informed of relevant follow-up. Parents and carers should not approach or question another pupil directly.

If a parent or carer remains concerned, they should follow the school's complaints procedure.

Records and review

The school will record bullying concerns and significant related incidents using its agreed systems. Records should be factual and include:

- what was reported or observed, including dates and relevant context;
- the views of the pupils involved;
- actions taken and the reasons for decisions;
- who was informed;
- the outcome and follow-up.

Safeguarding matters must also be recorded and managed through the school's safeguarding procedures.

Senior leaders will review records to identify repeated incidents, locations, times or patterns; check that concerns are followed through; and consider whether supervision, teaching, routines or pupil support need to change. The headteacher will review this policy at least annually and recommend any necessary changes to the governing body.