



# Safe to Learn Policy

(Commonly referred to as 'Anti-bullying Policy')

Member of staff responsible: Kirsty Munns

Ratified by Governors: July 2022

Next review date: May 2024

Review cycle: Bi-annually

At Bush Hill Park Primary School, we are committed to a policy of inclusion, equality and justice. We provide a warm, caring and safe place for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. All children need to feel safe in school in order to achieve their best.

Safety in school can be compromised where bullying is present. We are aware that children may be bullied in any setting, and recognise that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to any cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils.

At Bush Hill Park Primary School, we acknowledge that bullying can and does happen from time to time and that bullying can happen to adults in the workplace. When bullying does occur, everyone should feel able to speak out and to know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our school anti-bullying policy.

All children and young people have the right to be protected from physical, emotional and mental violence; a right enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children also have the right to learn, live, travel and play in a safe environment where they can thrive and achieve their full potential

At Bush Hill Park Primary School, we believe that a broad and balanced curriculum and effective learning all contribute to positive learning experiences. Children and adults collaborate to develop and maintain the school community based on equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation; this includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners and promotes wellbeing.

We believe that the best way to support the wellbeing of our children is through our Trauma Informed approach and by providing a calm, positive and nurturing environment.

As part of this we operate around three clear rules which are underpinned by our school values of respect, responsibility and resilience and set out a clear expectation for behaviour for learning across the school:

- Above and Beyond
- In the Zone
- Choose Kindness

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(July 2017\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2021\)](#)
- [Sexual Violence and Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges guidance](#)
- [Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for schools.](#)

This policy links with other school practices and policies, including:

- Safeguarding Policy (including sections related to Peer on Peer Abuse)
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Online Safety Policy

- Curriculum policies such as RSE/ PSHE and Computing

Links to Legislation:

- The Education and Inspection Act, 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

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**Definitions**

Bullying can be defined as *‘behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally’*. DfE ‘Preventing and Tackling Bullying’.

Bullying can include physical and emotional abuse such as name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, peer isolation, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

The same unacceptable behaviours can be expressed online; this is often known as cyber bullying or online bullying. Specifically, this can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, social media platforms including WhatsApp/TikTok/Instagram/Twitter and Facebook, through gaming websites and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

At Bush Hill Park Primary School, we recognise that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development. Bullying is recognised as a form of Peer on Peer abuse and this is covered in more depth in our Safeguarding Policy.

- Abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. We work with victims and perpetrators to support children who may be exposed to bullying.
- We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean that it is not happening and it may be the case that it is not being reported.
- All victims will be taken seriously and offered support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

### **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. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Children sometimes fall out and say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, although unkind, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns or a childish prank.

We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop skills to repair relationships. Children who act unkindly towards other children, in situations not deemed as bullying will be dealt with according to our Behaviour for Learning Policy and applying our Trauma Informed Practice.

### **Forms and Types of Bullying Covered by this Policy**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including and not limited to the following:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carer, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/ mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying/ harassment
- Bullying via technology, known as cyber bullying or online bullying
- Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people with protected characteristics) which may include:
  - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
  - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
  - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
  - Bullying related to sexual orientation, including transphobic bullying

## **Aims**

The aim of this policy is to try to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. We are committed to ensuring that the school community works together to create a happy, safe, caring and stimulating environment. We continually reinforce our vision of 'Be the best you can be', in relation to the way children interact with one another. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in.

All members of the school community have the responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

### **At Bush Hill Park Primary School, we want:**

- All children to feel safe to learn, play and enjoy the company of others.
- All children and adults to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity.
- All adults to feel happy and safe in the workplace.
- Everyone to listen carefully to what children and adults have to say and treat all accounts with due seriousness.

### **We will set about doing this the following ways:**

- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that the safety and safeguarding of all children is at the forefront of all decisions made.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers will know what the school policy is on bullying.
- Pupils and parents/carers will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PSHE lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work and express themselves free from fear of being bullied. This is reinforced by our commitment to Trauma Informed Practice.
- An annual anti-bullying week in which all children take part in workshops, activities and discussion about the impact of bullying and importance of speaking out.

## **Signs and Symptoms of bullying**

Rather than telling an adult, children may indicate by signs and symptoms that they are the victims of bullying. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be taken to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to come to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares

- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do less well in school work
- Comes home with clothes or possessions damaged
- Starts stealing money
- Has money 'lost' frequently
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Becomes aggressive or unreasonable
- Is bullying siblings or other children
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Is afraid to use their mobile phone [or internet]

NB: This is not a definitive list but suggests some of the signs and symptoms. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

### **Peer-on-Peer**

Peer-on Peer abuse can take various forms including:

- Serious bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Relationship abuse
- Domestic violence
- Child sexual exploitation
- Youth and serious youth violence (including gangs)
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Gender/Race violence

These types of abuse rarely take place in isolation and often indicate wider safeguarding concerns.

Our commitment to tackling peer on peer abuse is set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

### **Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Bullying**

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- Our three school rule approach – one of which is 'Choose Kindness', this is referred to daily during regular interactions with children and taught explicitly, children from EYFS through to KS2 are aware of what this looks like in reality and how to demonstrate this.
- Our School value of Respect being embedded across the curriculum – including teaching children the importance of respecting all differences and demonstrating respect for all individuals.
- Making national anti-bullying week a high-profile event each year.
- Raising awareness through assemblies, work in PSHE lessons and circle time discussions.
- Home School/ Agreement
- Reading stories about the impact of bullying and importance of speaking out
- Learning Mentor coaching sessions to support friendship groups

- Using drama and role-play activities to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations.
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives, e.g. zoning and structured play.
- Use of playground rangers.
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour.
- Involving parents and the wider community.
- Multi agency work – working with social services, police etc.

We recognise that bullying in schools is not limited to children and that adults can be victims of bullying in the workplace. Again, every effort has been made to create a culture of respect and openness which greatly limits the opportunity for this to take place. Staff need to feel safe in order to enable the children to feel safe. Staff are aware of procedures to follow in such an instance and again, are aware of who they can speak to, whether this is their line manager or a trusted member of staff, if they feel unable to do so they can contact their union for advice and support.

### **School Ethos**

Bush Hill Park Primary School recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed can have a devastating effect on individuals; it is a form of trauma that can create barriers to learning and have serious consequences for mental health and wellbeing.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and secure environment, rooted in mutual trust and respect for all that will enable all pupils to learn and fulfil their potential.

We will endeavour to ensure that there is adequate supervision at all times. Aspects of bullying will be discussed along with the appropriate way of behaving towards each other during PSHE times. Any concerns will be dealt with quickly, fairly and firmly. Parents will be involved as and when necessary.

The school will continue to operate its Behaviour for Learning Policy. We will encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards others. This includes discussion on what friendship is. We will encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.

We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take the opportunity to eradicate it from our school. We will continue to review this policy and its degree of success.

### **Our Community**

- Understands the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers.
- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of the community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will enable us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support where needed.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.

- Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- Will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

### **Responding to Concerns of Bullying**

At Bush Hill Park Primary School all staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying. Anyone reporting an incident of bullying can be confident in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all those involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with any incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – ensuring that they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
- All bullying incidents will be reported to the DSL via Safeguard
- The Headteacher, DSL or another appropriate member of the leadership team will interview all parties involved
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken
- The school will speak with and inform other members of staff, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure that parents/ carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality measures
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour and support as per our Trauma Informed approach will be offered to all parties. Depending on the outcomes identified support will also be offered to the perpetrators to repair and rebuild damages with the victim, where appropriate.
- Appropriate advice and ongoing support will be given to help the victim.
- If necessary and appropriate, other agencies may be consulted and informed, for example the police if a criminal offence has been committed or Early Help of a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this policy and the Behaviour for Learning policy.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.



Appropriate records will be kept of all incidents.

## **Cyberbullying**

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the victim, and work with the perpetrator to ensure it is not repeated.
- Encourage the victim to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying to support any investigation.
- Take all steps possible to identify the perpetrator/s, this may include looking at use of school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses and contact service providers and police if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to remove content.

This may include:

- Confiscating and searching pupil's electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation systems – we will access the DfE '*Searching, screening and confiscation at school*' and Childnet '*Cyberbullying Guidance*', to ensure that the school's powers are used proportionately and lawfully.
- Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Where an individual can be identified, the school will ensure that appropriate sanctions are implemented to change the attitude and behaviour of the perpetrator as well as ensuring access to any additional support or help they may need. Particularly when dealing with children it is important that all within our school community are supported when needed.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online, this may include;
  - Advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply but to report and evidence.
  - Providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
  - Helping those involved to consider and manage any private information they may have in the public domain.

## **Racist/Homophobic Incidents**

All incidents of racism will be reported to a member of the Headship team who will investigate and complete a racial incident form. Pupils from all ethnic groups will be treated fairly.

We recognise that it is the responsibility of the entire school community to seek to provide equality of opportunity for all our children regardless of culture, language, religion, ethnicity, ability, disability, gender, sexuality or social circumstance.

## **Supporting Pupils**

Pupils who have been the victim of bullying will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL or member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond with any further concerns.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support. This may include working with and speaking with staff, offering mentoring and engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or integrated Children Services or support through the CAMHS.

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be supported by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help establish concerns and develop changes.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding the impact of their actions on others.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/ content to service providers.
- Implementation of the Behaviour for Learning policy and as such, in extreme or repeated cases the consideration of fixed or permanent exclusion.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or integrated Children Services or support through the CAMHS.

## **Supporting Adults**

At Bush Hill Park Primary School, we take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members could be a possibility and is unacceptable.

Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to future concerns.
- Where the bullying takes place off site or after school hours (including online), the school will investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school's behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/ or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide specialist advice and guidance.

Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be supported by:

- Discussing what has happened with a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

### **Preventing Bullying**

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others and our Trauma Informed practices and approaches, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Recognise the potential for children with SEND to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Recognise that bullying may be affected by and influenced by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as; children with different family situations, such as looked after or those with caring responsibilities, religion. Ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the school values of respect, resilience and responsibility.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Actively create 'safe spaces' for vulnerable children.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.
- We will collate pupil voice through the school MPs (council) and through parent and child surveys on their views of bullying.
- We will ensure that all children know how to express worries and anxieties around bullying.
- Involve children in anti-bullying campaigns and provide a high-profile platform during anti-bullying week.

### **Monitoring and evaluation of the policy**

To ensure the policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors the impact of all policies. This committee report its findings to the full governing body and it will be amended as necessary. We aim to monitor the policy through Scholar Pack logs and communication logs with parents/ carers.

## **What can you do if you are being bullied?**

At Bush Hill Park Primary school, we have worked hard to ensure a culture of openness in which children are confident that adults will listen to them. We want everybody to feel confident to report bullying whenever and wherever it happens, and to be able to get the help they need to feel safe again. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people that can help you. Tell someone you trust, giving them as many facts as you can (Who? Where? What? Why? When? How?).

All pupils know that if they are experiencing bullying, they should tell their teacher or a trusted adult in the first instance. Should a pupil not feel confident in doing this our learning mentors are available to speak to pupils or they may choose to use the school MP representatives.

### **Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.**

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is WRONG.
- Be proud of who you are - it is good to be individual.
- Stay with a group of friends / people.
- Be assertive – shout “NO!” Walk away confidently. Go straight to an adult and tell them.
- Generally, it is best to tell a grown up whom you trust straight away. They will support you. All adults in our school will take you seriously and will help to stop the bullying.

### **If you know someone is being bullied**

- Take action. Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel unhappier and alone. You can help without putting yourself in danger.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell a grown up straight away. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be friends with a bully.

### **As a Parent/ Carer**

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly decide they do not wish to attend school, they may feel ill regularly or not be doing as well with their work.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Ask how their day has gone, who they played with etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, let the school know.
- Your concern will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- Tell your child that there is nothing wrong with him / her. It is not his/her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child knows our policy on bullying and that they need not be afraid to ask for help.