



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date of policy	September 2026
Review date	September 2027
Policy lead	PSHE Co-ordinator

1. Principles and Values

Park Hall Infant Academy is a welcoming, friendly, caring and inclusive school. We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that all children can learn and play in a safe, relaxed and secure environment. We aim to foster relationships based on mutual respect, kindness, tolerance and support, while preparing our children to become happy, confident and responsible members of society.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Park Hall Infant Academy. We take all concerns about bullying seriously and respond promptly, fairly and consistently. Every child has the right to feel safe, valued, respected and included. We recognise that bullying can have a significant impact on a child's self-esteem, emotional wellbeing, attendance, behaviour and ability to learn.

Our approach is based on prevention, early identification, effective intervention and ongoing support. We recognise that children involved in bullying may need support, guidance and education, whether they have experienced bullying, witnessed it or engaged in bullying behaviour.

We adopt a whole-school approach in which all members of our school community have a shared responsibility for creating an environment where bullying is challenged and positive relationships are promoted.

2. Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that everyone in our school community:

- understands what bullying is and how it may present itself;
- understands the difference between bullying and individual incidents of unkind behaviour or disagreement;
- understands that bullying can be physical, verbal, relational, discriminatory or online;
- knows how to report concerns about bullying;
- feels confident that concerns will be listened to and taken seriously;
- understands how the school will respond to reports of bullying;
- knows how children who experience bullying will be supported;
- understands how children who engage in bullying behaviour will be supported and held accountable;
- understands the importance of reporting bullying and not retaliating;
- recognises the role that bystanders and witnesses can play in preventing bullying;
- promotes positive relationships, kindness, respect and inclusion throughout the school;
- works in partnership with parents and carers to prevent and respond to bullying.

3. What is Bullying?

The Department for Education describes bullying as behaviour that is generally repeated, intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally, and often directed towards particular groups or characteristics.

Bullying may be:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, damaging or taking belongings.
- Verbal – name-calling, teasing, threatening, mocking or making hurtful comments.
- Relational/social – deliberately excluding someone, encouraging others not to play with them, spreading rumours or repeatedly manipulating friendships.
- Online/cyberbullying – using digital technology, online platforms, messaging, gaming or social media to deliberately hurt, threaten, humiliate or exclude someone.
- Discriminatory or prejudice-based – behaviour targeting someone because of a protected characteristic or perceived difference, including race, religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation or other characteristics protected by law.
- Indirect – encouraging others to hurt, exclude or upset another child or repeatedly manipulating situations to cause distress.

Bullying may involve one child or a group of children. It may also involve children who witness or encourage the behaviour. Our school recognises that behaviour does not need to meet the definition of bullying before it is taken seriously. Any behaviour that causes harm, distress or fear will be addressed appropriately.

4. Children's Understanding of Bullying

We value children's voices and regularly discuss bullying through PSHE/PSED, assemblies, circle time and class discussions. Our children define bullying as follows:

Reception: "You hurt someone on purpose lots of times."

Year 1: "Bullying means when someone does something mean like pushing you over on purpose again and again...or making fun of you...or leaving someone out lots of times".

Year 2: "Bullying means being unkind to somebody – hitting somebody, punching, kicking. Doing things that you know someone doesn't like on purpose".

5. What is NOT Bullying?

Not every disagreement, argument or incident of unkind behaviour constitutes bullying. Children are developing their social and emotional skills and, particularly in an infant school, may experience:

- disagreements between friends;
- arguments over toys or games;
- falling out;
- occasional name-calling;
- accidental physical contact;
- difficulty sharing or taking turns;
- one-off incidents of unkind behaviour.

These incidents should never simply be dismissed. Staff should respond appropriately, help children understand the impact of their behaviour and support them to repair relationships.

A single incident may be extremely upsetting and may require a significant response. Repeated incidents may also be treated as bullying where the behaviour meets the school's definition. The school will consider the context, frequency, intention, impact, power imbalance and individual circumstances rather than relying solely on whether an incident has happened a particular number of times.

6. Discriminatory and Prejudice-Based Bullying

Park Hall Infant Academy is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which every child is respected and valued.

Discriminatory or prejudice-based bullying includes behaviour that targets a child because of a protected characteristic, perceived difference or aspect of their identity.

This may include behaviour relating to:

- race, ethnicity or nationality;
- religion or belief;
- disability or special educational need;
- sex or gender;
- appearance, family circumstances or other perceived differences.

Examples may include:

- racial slurs or comments;
- mocking a child's religion, beliefs, culture or traditions;
- deliberately excluding a child because of disability or SEND;
- repeatedly making derogatory comments about a child's appearance;
- using stereotypes to demean another child;
- making comments about a child's family or background intended to cause distress.

Prejudice-based behaviour is unacceptable whether or not it meets the full definition of bullying.

All incidents will be taken seriously, recorded appropriately and dealt with in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Equality duties and safeguarding procedures where relevant.

Staff will challenge discriminatory language and behaviour promptly and use incidents as opportunities for age-appropriate education about respect, equality and diversity.

7. Cyberbullying and Online Behaviour

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using digital technology. It can happen through:

- messaging
- online games
- social media
- group chats
- video-sharing platforms
- emails
- websites or online forums
- images, videos or recordings
- other digital communication

Although children at Park Hall Infant Academy are young, we recognise that online behaviour can affect children's relationships and wellbeing.

Cyberbullying may include:

- sending repeated hurtful messages;
- deliberately excluding someone from an online group;
- sharing embarrassing photographs or videos;
- making threats online;
- pretending to be someone else to upset another child;
- encouraging other children to make hurtful comments;

- sharing or creating content intended to humiliate another child.

The school will respond to cyberbullying where it involves pupils or has an impact on the welfare, safety or education of our pupils, including where behaviour occurs outside school.

Children are taught age-appropriate online safety through the curriculum and wider school provision. Parents and carers are encouraged to speak to school if they have concerns about online behaviour involving their child.

Any safeguarding concerns arising from online behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8. Possible Signs of Bullying

Children may respond to bullying in different ways. Some children may not tell an adult because they are worried about making things worse, feel embarrassed or believe that nobody will help them. Possible signs include:

- becoming unusually quiet, withdrawn or anxious;
- becoming reluctant or unwilling to attend school;
- frequent unexplained physical complaints;
- changes in eating or sleeping patterns;
- becoming unusually clingy towards adults;
- changes in friendships or play patterns;
- becoming upset before or after break/lunchtime;
- loss or damage to belongings;
- unexplained injuries;
- reduced motivation or concentration;
- changes in behaviour;
- a decline in confidence or self-esteem;
- changes in academic attainment;
- appearing worried about using digital devices;
- becoming distressed after receiving messages or using online platforms.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being bullied. Staff should remain alert to changes in behaviour and consider whether further investigation or safeguarding support is required.

9. Preventing Bullying

Our whole-school approach aims to create a positive, respectful and inclusive environment in which bullying is less likely to occur.

Prevention includes:

- clear behaviour expectations shared with children, staff and families;
- positive relationships between staff and pupils;
- consistent implementation of the Behaviour Policy;
- PSHE/PSED teaching focused on relationships, emotions, respect and friendship;
- teaching children how to resolve disagreements appropriately;
- teaching children how to recognise and report bullying;
- assemblies;
- circle time and class discussions;
- role-play, stories and puppets to explore friendship and problem-solving;
- teaching children about diversity and inclusion;

- age-appropriate online safety education;
- National Anti-Bullying Week activities;
- Children's Mental Health Week activities;
- World Mental Health Day activities;
- Religious celebration and diversity activities;
- Lunchtime Sanctuary Club;
- celebrating kindness and positive behaviour;
- listening to pupil voice through questionnaires, discussions and pupil feedback;
- working closely with parents and carers.

The school will also monitor patterns of behaviour and incidents to identify areas where additional support or preventative action may be needed.

10. Reporting Bullying

Children are encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they are being bullied, see someone else being bullied, or are worried about something happening to themselves or another child.

Children are taught that telling an adult is not "telling tales" when someone is being hurt or made to feel unsafe.

Children may speak to:

- their class teacher;
- teaching assistant;
- lunchtime supervisor;
- member of the Senior Leadership Team;
- any trusted adult in school.

Parents and carers should report concerns directly to the school rather than approaching another child or their parents themselves.

11. Responding to Reports of Bullying

All reports will be taken seriously.

When a concern is raised, staff will:

1. Listen carefully to the child and provide reassurance.
2. Establish the facts as far as possible without making assumptions.
3. Speak to children individually where appropriate.
4. Consider the nature, frequency, intention, impact and context of the behaviour.
5. Consider whether there is a safeguarding concern.
6. Record incidents in accordance with school procedures.
7. Inform the appropriate member of staff and/or DSL where necessary.
8. Speak to parents/carers where appropriate.
9. Put appropriate support and monitoring in place.
10. Take proportionate action in line with the Behaviour Policy.
11. Follow up with the child who has experienced the behaviour.
12. Monitor the situation to ensure that the behaviour has stopped.

The school will avoid labelling children unnecessarily. Where a child has engaged in bullying behaviour, we will address the behaviour firmly while recognising that the child may also need support to understand the impact of their actions and develop more appropriate ways of behaving.

12. Supporting Children Who Experience Bullying

Children who experience bullying will be listened to and supported.

Support may include:

- providing a trusted adult to talk to;
- increased supervision at particular times;
- support with friendships;
- targeted PSHE/PSED work;
- support to rebuild confidence and self-esteem;
- opportunities to discuss and process feelings;
- regular check-ins;
- involvement of the SENDCo where appropriate;
- working closely with parents/carers.

The child's views and wishes will be considered wherever appropriate and in accordance with their age and understanding.

13. Supporting Children Who Engage in Bullying Behaviour

The school will respond consistently and proportionately to children who engage in bullying behaviour.

This may include:

- discussing the behaviour with the child;
- helping them understand the impact of their actions;
- identifying triggers or underlying difficulties;
- alternative behaviours;
- restorative conversations where appropriate;
- targeted PSHE/PSED support;
- increased monitoring;
- involvement of parents/carers;
- SEND support where appropriate;
- appropriate consequences in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Disciplinary consequences will be proportionate to the behaviour and individual circumstances.

14. The Role of Bystanders

Children who witness bullying can play an important role in helping to stop it.

- tell a trusted adult;
- support the child who is being bullied;
- avoid joining in;
- avoid encouraging the behaviour;
- use kind and inclusive behaviour;
- seek help if they feel unable to intervene safely.

We will teach children that standing by and joining in can make bullying worse, while speaking to a trusted adult can help keep someone safe.

15. Recording and Monitoring

All significant incidents of bullying, discriminatory behaviour and repeated unkind behaviour will be recorded in accordance with school procedures.

The school will monitor incidents to identify:

- recurring patterns;

- locations where incidents occur;
- times of day when incidents are more likely;
- groups or individuals who may require additional support;
- discriminatory patterns;
- online behaviour concerns;
- the effectiveness of interventions.

Information will be used to inform PSHE/PSED teaching, staff supervision and wider school improvement. Records will be maintained in accordance with the school's data protection and safeguarding procedures.

16. Safeguarding

Bullying can be a safeguarding concern, particularly where behaviour involves threats, violence, serious emotional harm, discriminatory abuse or online harm.

All staff have a responsibility to act on safeguarding concerns and report them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL without delay.

The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed where a concern indicates that a child may be at risk of harm.

17. The Role of Staff

All staff are expected to:

- model respectful and inclusive behaviour;
- challenge bullying, discriminatory language and derogatory behaviour;
- take children's concerns seriously;
- follow the school's Behaviour and Safeguarding Policies;
- report and record concerns appropriately;
- avoid making assumptions about incidents;
- support children involved;
- maintain appropriate confidentiality;
- communicate with parents/carers where appropriate;
- seek advice from the DSL or Senior Leadership Team where necessary.

18. The Role of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- report concerns about bullying to the school promptly;
- encourage their child to talk to a trusted adult;
- listen carefully to their child and reassure them;
- avoid encouraging retaliation;
- work constructively with school;
- support the school's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies;
- monitor their child's online activity in an age-appropriate way;
- preserve evidence of online incidents where appropriate;
- encourage respectful and responsible online behaviour.

Parents and carers should avoid approaching or confronting another child directly.

The school will work in partnership with families to resolve concerns wherever possible.

19. Equality and Inclusion

Park Hall Infant Academy is committed to equality, inclusion and respect for all members of our school community. We recognise that children may be more vulnerable to bullying because of disability, SEND, race, religion or belief, sex, gender identity, appearance, family circumstances or other perceived differences. We will actively challenge stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory behaviour and promote understanding and respect through our curriculum and wider school life.

20. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or school practice.

The policy will be reviewed alongside the:

Behaviour Policy;
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
Computing/Online Safety Policy;
Equality Information and Objectives;
RSHE/PSHE Policy.

Pupil voice, staff feedback, parent/carers feedback and analysis of behaviour and bullying incidents will be considered as part of the review process.

Further Information and Support

The school will signpost families to appropriate sources of advice and support where necessary, including:

Department for Education – Preventing and Tackling Bullying
Department for Education – Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
Department for Education – Behaviour in Schools
Jigsaw PSHE resources – see the school website and staff resources.

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Policy lead: Alice Rooker, PSHE Co-ordinator