



# Anti- Bullying Policy

River Bank Primary School

November 2024

## Introduction

In Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, there is an increased emphasis about child on child abuse and that staff need to recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. It should be clear as to how victims of child on child abuse will be supported.

This policy should be read in conjunction with and with reference to:

Behaviour Management Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Child on Child Abuse Policy and Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

## Rationale

At River Bank Primary School, we are opposed to bullying of any kind (towards children, staff and the wider community) and will take all necessary action to eradicate it from our school. We aim to create an ethos where children work without fear, achieve through enjoyment, lack mental and physical stress, and feel part of the school and local community. Our policy aims to be preventative and pro-active to enable children to learn and be taught to their full potential, regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual identity, age, ability, appearance or culture. At River Bank; we believe ‘Kindness is King’.

## The Nature of Bullying

Bullying behaviour can take many forms and as a result it can be very difficult to identify. The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines it as being:

“the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”

The main types of bullying are:

- **physical:** pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching, threats, stealing
- **verbal:** name calling, insulting, sarcasm, persistent teasing, offensive remarks, spreading rumours
- **emotional:** tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from social groups
- **racist:** racial taunts, jokes, offensive mimicry, graffiti, gestures
- **sexual:** inappropriate and uninvited touching, abusive comments, innuendoes, reference to sexuality e.g. homophobic comments
- **gender:** inappropriate, inferior comments and attitudes directed towards the opposite sex
- **cyber:** using computers or mobile phones to intimidate or humiliate someone; including the use of social media.

Bullying is more likely to occur in schools where adult supervision is intermittent.



## Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

As many victims of bullying are reluctant to speak to an adult about their situation, it is important that all adults in school watch for signs which may indicate that problems exist.

All adults play a crucial role in identifying when bullying occurs and need to be aware of the symptoms of bullying. Victims may:

- be reluctant to attend school and are often absent.
- be more anxious and insecure than others, become withdrawn and lack confidence.
- have fewer friends or withdraw from friendships and often feel unhappy and lonely.
- suffer a drop in standards of school work/not working to potential.
- suffer from low self-esteem and negative self-image, looking upon themselves as failures
  - feeling stupid, ashamed and unattractive.
- stop eating, have nightmares.
- have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts/physical injuries.
- start stealing or "losing" money and possessions.
- show reluctance to go out at playtimes, asking for jobs or feigning illness.
- ask to be sent home early or hang around school in order to leave late.
- be easily upset.
- display behavioural difficulties e.g. aggression.

## Dealing with a Bullying Incident

In dealing with a bullying incident, we are aiming to help both the victim and perpetrator fully understand the situation that has developed. We strive to help them both consider ways of avoiding or resolving the difficulties they are experiencing or are responsible for. Staff dealing with incidents will have to make a judgement about whether they are dealing with a bullying incident or a fall out or dispute between pupils.

If an allegation of bullying is made to a member of staff, they are required to take immediate action and follow up with advice from the year lead or a member of senior staff.

The headteacher must be informed of all reported bullying incidents and how they are to be dealt with and recorded on CPOMS.

### Procedures for dealing with a Bullying Incident.

1. A clear account of the incident will be recorded by the class teacher/member of staff to whom the allegation has been made and recorded on CPOMS.
2. The teacher / year lead will then interview all parties and carefully record, on CPOMS, the outcomes and actions taken.
3. Preventative and restorative measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties.
4. Relevant colleagues will be kept clearly informed.
5. Parents of both the victim and the perpetrator will be informed.
6. A review meeting will be held two weeks later.

7. The success of any strategies used will be evaluated.

### Dealing with the victim of bullying

Our primary concern is to protect the victim. It is vital that we support the victim by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an adult of the victim's choice.
- reassuring the pupil that something can and will be done to stop the bullying.
- explaining how the incident will be dealt with.
- offering continuous support over a period of time as appropriate.
- restoring confidence and self-esteem.
- exploring the causes and effects of the incident.

It is critical that once a victim has spoken out they have immediate access to a named member of staff to discuss any future incidents or concerns.

### Dealing with the perpetrator

We will:

- ensure that the perpetrator is dealt with fairly.
- describe the reasons for the discussion.
- remain calm and non-judgemental.
- ensure that the pupil has a chance to explain their view of the incident.
- assure the pupil that all incidents of bullying are taken seriously.
- explain that, regardless of reasons, the school disapproves of all acts of bullying.
- explain how the incident will be dealt with.
- explore the causes and effects of the incident.
- explore how the incident could have been avoided.

Investigating incidents of bullying is time consuming and must be carried out in private. Poor management of incidents is likely to lead to an even greater reluctance of victims to speak out.

The headteacher must be made aware of all bullying incidents. A chronology of all incidents is kept electronically on CPOMS.

## **Preventative Responses to Bullying**

At River Bank Primary we use a range of strategies to prevent bullying. These include:

**Curriculum:** As a school we give children opportunities to analyse bullying situations within well-resourced PSHE lessons that have been carefully planned. In all year groups, we teach children strategies to deal with situations they may find themselves in as well as teaching them what healthy relationships look like and feel like. There is a whole school focus on bullying during National Anti-Bullying week, which takes place in November where children participate in

activities that provide them with the information and vocabulary necessary to better understand what bullying is and how it impacts those being bullied. Assemblies linked to Anti-bullying take place throughout the year.

**Mediation:** This measure will only be used at the request of and with agreement from the victim. This involves collaborative problem solving by the victim and the perpetrator in the presence of a teacher. It concentrates on the future rather than dwelling on the past and apportioning blame. It acknowledges feelings as well as facts. Perpetrators often take out their negative feelings on others which may be exacerbated by the reaction of others. Mediation can enable all parties to move on in a positive supportive way.

**Restorative Justice:** Restorative justice brings victims and perpetrators together to decide on a resolution to a particular incident. It is about putting victims' needs at the centre of the school's actions and finding positive solutions to bullying by encouraging the perpetrator to face up to their actions. A Senior Teacher will be present during this consultation.

**Anti-Bullying Prefects:** Research has shown that victims are much more likely to report incidents of bullying to their peers rather than an adult. It is, therefore, sensible to involve children and young people in the reporting process. Prefects from each year six class are appointed to offer peer support.

**Circle of Friends:** The class meets with the class teacher who explains that it is unusual to talk about a pupil who is not present but that the pupil and their parents are supporting this. Following ground rules the class presents ways that they might help the pupil and a 'circle of friends' is set up to give support, working with the class teacher.

**Befriending, or the buddy system:** This is when a volunteer is selected to befriend a pupil who is having difficulties.

## Involving Parents

Parental support is often a key to success or failure in anti-bullying initiatives. Consultation is important, helping create an ethos in which positive behaviour is encouraged, and bullying considered unacceptable. Our policy is to involve parents constructively at an early stage using a problem-solving approach in the first instance.

## Strategies for Reducing Playground Bullying

The school's playground environment is carefully organised, to offer space for educational, social, physical and creative activities, reducing boredom and therefore bullying.

This is achieved by providing:

- a stimulating range of playground equipment and the use of playground leaders to organise activity games and activities painted on to the playgrounds.
- zoning areas for different activities.
- the buddy bench.

## Monitoring and Review

This policy will be annually reviewed by the Full Governing Body.

**Signed:**



**Adopted:**

November 2024

**Review Date:**

November 2025

