

Ouston Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Review Date: Autumn 2025

Reviewed by: Full Governing Body

Next Review date: Autumn 2026

This policy has been developed and implemented in consultation with the whole school community including pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors. It was written with reference to the Equality Act 2010 and includes guidance from the Anti-Bullying Alliance and the NSPCC.

This policy should be read alongside our policies on Equality and Diversity, Teaching and Learning, Special Educational Needs, Behaviour, Child Protection and Child on Child Abuse.

Statement of Intent

Ouston Primary School is committed to providing a supportive, caring and safe environment in which all children are free from the fear of being bullied. As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Bullying of any form is not tolerated in our school. Staff, children and parents/carers will be made aware of the school's position on bullying.

The school has high expectations of behaviour and we consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff. Any child who is a victim of bullying will be dealt with in a sympathetic manner. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff informed, and then discussed with the Headteacher. A clear account of the incident (s) will be recorded on our recording system (CPOMS). All staff will be informed so that close monitoring of the victim and pupil carrying out the bullying behaviour can begin. Parents/Carers of both parties will be informed.

What is bullying?

We recognise that many children and young people will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and young people and as a school we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

At Ouston Primary School, our definition of bullying is: "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"

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent. Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent - if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger, then intervention is urgently required.
- However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out. Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional).

Usually, following a relational conflict incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to try to resolve the conflict. Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'. Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying.

Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

There is considerable evidence to show that bullying has both short term and longer term impact on pupils. Bullying impacts on pupils' wellbeing, can impact on attendance and become a significant barrier to learning.

Bullying is associated with lower levels of school engagement and achievement both in primary and secondary schools and can lead to mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression.

Our school will respond promptly and effectively to reported incidents of bullying. In our school community:

- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- Everybody has the right to feel happy and safe.
- No-one deserves to be a target of bullying.
- Pupils who carry out bullying behaviour need to learn different ways of behaving.

National research has shown that some groups of pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include pupils with SEND, children in care, pupils from minority ethnic groups or faiths, young carers, LGBT pupils and those perceived to be LGBT.

Types of bullying behaviour

Bullying can take many forms:

- Emotional - being negative/unfriendly, excluding, threatening behaviour
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, use of derogatory language
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Extortion - demanding money/goods with threats
- Online - use of social media, messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology e.g photos and videos, misuse of information.
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comment
- Homophobic or biphobic - bullying because of sexuality or perceived sexuality
- Transphobic - because of gender identity or perceived gender identity

Signs of Bullying

Staff should be vigilant in looking out for signs of bullying and other issues relating to school or home, including child protection issues. These may present as:

- **Physical:** unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes, or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches, bedwetting.
- **Emotional:** losing interest in school, being withdrawn or secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why they are unhappy, high level of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, lack of confidence, headaches and stomach aches, signs of depression.
- **Behavioural:** asking to be taken to school, wanting to come home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asking for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties, truancy.

Preventing Bullying

We foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole school community and when there are incidents of bullying we will work together to deal with the situation and to learn from what has happened.

In our school we do this by:

- Involving the school community in developing our policy
- Using assemblies, RSE lessons and circle time in class/groups to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.
- We have an Anti-Bullying week in November where we look at this area in detail with pupils. Our pupils also take part in the NSPCC 'Kindness Challenge' during this week.
- Building a positive ethos based on respecting and celebrating all types of difference in our school. This includes our RSE 'One Britain' theme, displays around school, annual participation in the Show Racism the Red Card poster/creative writing competition and an annual 'Celebrating Neurodiversity Day'. We are also a Rights Respecting Schools Silver Award School.
- Creating a safe and happy environment, with consequent positive relationships that have an impact on learning and achievement.
- Having a positive ethos that all pupils, staff and parents/carers understand and contribute to.

- Providing activities in school which develop respect, empathy, social skills and emotional understanding e.g. PSHE, RSE, Rights Respecting Schools assemblies and activities, social and emotional learning programmes, circle time, peer mentoring and playground buddies.
- Provide assurances to children that they will be listened to and action will be taken.
- Ensuring children have a range of ways to report concerns and feel they have a trusted adult they can talk to.
- Raising awareness of online bullying through online safety lessons and staff training
- Focussed work with individuals and groups of pupils where required to support understanding and development of social skills and friendships e.g. social skills groups, Circle Time, Time to Talk sessions with the School Counsellor, Lego and Draw Therapy.
- Giving pupils a range of roles and responsibilities including monitor jobs, School Council and Rights Respecting Team, Peer Mentors, Reception Buddies and organizing Friday Fundraisers.
- Having a range of activities at break/lunchtime to promote positive play.
- Having a clear and consistent Behaviour Policy

Reporting Bullying

In our school pupils are encouraged to talk to staff when they are unhappy or have concerns. Pupils in our school understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe. Pupils are encouraged to report bullying to:

- Their parents/carers
- Their class teacher/TA
- The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher
- Lunchtime Supervisory Assistants
- Kidz Club staff
- Peer mentors
- Each class has a 'worry box' where children can report their concerns if they do not feel confident speaking to an adult.

Children are taught that it is important to talk to a trusted adult if bullying is taking place outside of school. Parents/carers are also encouraged to report concerns and bullying; this is normally to the class teacher initially who will then

involve the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher if bullying behavior is identified. When pupils report their concerns our staff listen and reassure the pupil that they will take action to support them. We involve children as far as possible in finding solutions.

Responding to Bullying

When bullying behavior has been reported to and identified by staff, we take the following actions:

Secure the safety of the target of the bullying. This may involve:

- keeping the pupils involved apart at break/lunchtimes.
- allowing a pupil who is being bullied to have indoor break/lunchtimes with a friend if they wish
- using the stages in our behaviour policy to keep the pupil carrying out the bullying behavior indoors at break/lunchtimes if needed
- Close monitoring of the pupil carrying out the bullying behavior
- Carrying out a risk assessment if needed
- Talking to pupils who may have witnessed the bullying behavior to ensure we have an accurate overview of the situation.

Take actions to prevent the bullying happening again. This may involve:

- Working with both parties to find solutions and move forward.
- Meetings with parents/carers to discuss the situation and agree actions
- Using the stages/procedures/consequences in our Behaviour Policy to support the pupil carrying out the bullying behavior in reflecting upon their behavior and improving/changing this moving forward. This starts with time in our break-time and lunchtime reflection rooms as appropriate and moves onto Individual Behaviour Plans, lunch-time exclusions and fixed term exclusions where necessary.
- Individual Time to Talk sessions
- Lego or Draw Therapy
- Circle Time sessions and restorative approach
- Referrals to external agencies where needed. This includes Child Protection/Safeguarding Services where appropriate.

Bullying incidents are recorded in our recording system (CPOMS) which allows us to monitor individual pupils and provides a clear chronology.

Reflect and Learn from bullying incidents/situations. This may include:

- Further staff training

- Adapting or adding to our PSHE/RSE curriculum
- Reviewing the Anti-Bullying policy and the Behaviour Policy.

We monitor and review bullying incidents to determine any patterns or trends that may require further action.

We give pupils the opportunity to feed back on how safe and happy they feel at school. We do this through annual pupil questionnaires, weekly Rights Respecting Schools Assemblies and regular School Council meetings.

We also ask for parent/carer views about bullying annually in our parent/carer survey.

Procedures for Parents/Carers:

- If a parent/carer has any concerns about their child they should speak to the class teacher.
- If a parent/carer feels unable to talk to the class teacher, they can make an appointment to speak directly with the Headteacher.
- The school will work with both the child and the parents/carers to ensure that any bullying behaviour is stopped and that support is given where needed.
- Parents/carers should not confront the child accused of bullying or their parents/carers. This can complicate the situation and distress the pupils involved.
- Parents/carers will be kept informed of any actions the school is taking.
- If parents/carers feel that their concern has not been dealt with appropriately they should follow the schools complaints policy.
- All members of the school community, including pupils, staff, parents/carers and governors, are expected to treat everyone with dignity and respect at all times. This includes both face-to-face contact and online.

Approved and adopted: Following Governors Meeting on the 20th October 2025

Review Date: October 2026