Anti-Bullying Policy

Written by: Stacey Tang	**Date:** September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2028

Background

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” and “Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges” guidance. The setting has also read Childnet’s “Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools”.

Policy Objectives

- This policy outlines what Marshlands Primary School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- Marshlands Primary School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults or children is not tolerated.

Links with Other Policies and Guidance

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Behaviour and Relationship Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Managing Violent and Abusive Visitors
- Online Safety
- Searching, Screening and Confiscating Policy

Links to Legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- 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.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

Definition of Bullying

- 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 (e.g. excluding people from groups) and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

- The same unacceptable behaviours can be expressed online; this is sometimes called online bullying or cyberbullying. Specifically, this can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Marshlands Primary School recognises that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.
- Bullying is recognised by Marshlands Primary School as being a form of child-on-child abuse; children can abuse other children.
  - Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
  - We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
  - All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

Types Of Bullying

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

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, 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 online bullying or cyberbullying
- Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils 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 (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
  - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying

School Ethos

Marshlands Primary School recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential. As a whole school community, we therefore:

- Understands the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers.
- Monitor and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Support staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensure 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.
- Require all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.

- Recognise 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.
- Deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilise support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

Responding to bullying Concerns

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 logged immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern. This will be logged as a bullying investigation.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying concerns, especially where there may be safeguarding issues.
- A member of the senior leadership team will interview all parties involved. A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by the SLT member as an action to the original bullying investigation log. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken. If the incident is deemed to be bullying, then the SLT member who has carried out the investigation will change the category to Bullying. If it is not deemed bullying then the category will remain and a short explanation added.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with other school policies.
- Appropriate sanctions and support, for example as identified within the school behaviour policy and child protection policy, will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, for example the police if a criminal offence has been committed, or SaPH / Early Help if 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, our Online Safety Policy and the school behaviour policy.
- If required, the DSL will collaborate with DSLs at other settings.

Cyber Bullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied, and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include speaking to parents or the school's IT support team.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include speaking to parents to check mobile phones and settings.
- Where an individual can be identified, the school will ensure that appropriate sanctions are implemented to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help or support they may need.
- 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.
  - 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.

Supporting Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied 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 a member of staff of their choice.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff, offering additional support, 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 Children Services or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS)

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include:
- official warnings
- internal suspension
- In extreme or repeated cases, fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Children Services or Early Help or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Supporting Adults

Our school takes 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, 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 school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools' 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 further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what 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. o If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary 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, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child on child abuse).
- Recognise the potential for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to be disproportionally impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required. Recognise that bullying may be affected 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 children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- 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 and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

The whole school community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour. Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying bought to the schools' attention, which involves or effects pupils, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

The school community will:

- Train all staff, including teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.

- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school parliament, etc. Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building self-esteem.

Working with Pupils

We will:

- Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Regularly canvas pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil led education and support
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

Working with Parents and Carers

We will:

- Ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner

Useful Links and Support

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.

Anti-Bullying Alliance: Anti-Bullying Alliance

Childline: Childline | Childline

Family Lives: Parenting and Family Support - Family Lives (Parentline Plus)

Kidscape: Help With Bullying | Bullying Advice | Kidscape

MindEd: MindEd Hub

NSPCC: NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC

PSHE Association: PSHE Association | Charity and membership body for PSHE education (pshe-association.org.uk)

Restorative Justice Council: Restorative Justice Council | Promoting quality restorative practice for everyone

The Diana Award: The Diana Award (diana-award.org.uk)

Victim Support: Home - Victim Support

Young Minds: YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | YoungMinds

Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

Childnet: www.childnet.com

Internet Watch Foundation: Eliminating Child Sexual Abuse Online | Internet Watch Foundation IWF

Report Harmful Content: Harms (reportharmfulcontent.com)

UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): UK Council for Internet Safety - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff': Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (publishing.service.gov.uk)

DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION ADVICE: (publishing.service.gov.uk)

SEND

Changing Faces: Changing Faces | Visible Difference & Disfigurement Charity

Mencap: Access Learning Disability Advice and Support | Mencap

Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: SEN & Disability (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

DfE: SEND code of practice: SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Race, Religion and Nationality

Anne Frank Trust: Anne Frank Trust UK

Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org

Report it: Stop Homophobic, Transphobic, Racial, Religious & Disability Hate Crime - True Vision (report-it.org.uk)

Stop Hate: Stop Hate UK (sumupstore.com)

Tell Mama: Tell Mama: Report in Anti-Muslim Hate or Islamophobia (tellmamauk.org)

Educate against Hate: Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism

Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LBGTQ+

Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub: LGBT+ young people | Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)

EACH: Resources - EACH | EACH

Proud Trust: The Proud Trust - Home of LGBT+ Youth

Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying

NSPCC ‘Report Abuse in Education’ Helpline: 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): Home | End Violence Against Women

Disrespect No Body: 505583_6004297_VIOLENCE_420x297.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: Tools & information (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: Responding to sexual and sexist bullying (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Childnet Project DeShame (Online Sexual Harassment and Bullying: Project deSHAME | Childnet