

Anti-Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Meare Village Primary School



Approved by:	Headteacher	Date: September 2022
Last reviewed on:	September 2024	
Next review due by:	September 2025	

Introduction

‘Successful schools create an environment that prevents bullying from being a serious problem in the first place.’

Everyone at Meare Village Primary School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve their full potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos. Where bullying exists, the victims must feel confident in activating the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, staff and parents.

We encourage children's sense of responsibility towards each other (Respectful – one of the school's behaviours for learning) and emphasise that if anyone knows that bullying is happening, they should tell a staff member straightaway: **See it - Say it - Stop it.**

Definitions

DfE definition: “Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.”

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of 1 person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Principles

It is the responsibility of the governing body and the Headteacher to ensure that all members of the school community work within a safe and enabling environment.

The four guiding principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpin our Anti- Bullying Policy from the moment a pupil enters our school, and throughout their time at school.

They are:

- every pupil is a unique pupil, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- pupils learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- pupils learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- pupils develop and learn in different ways and at different rates including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Aims

We are determined to promote and develop a school ethos where bullying behaviour is regarded as unacceptable, to ensure a safe and secure environment is sustained for all pupils.

We aim for all pupils to reach their potential academically, socially and personally through learning and playing in a safe and secure environment.

Bullying and Child-On-Child abuse:

Bullying and Child-on-child abuse can take many forms:

- **Physical** (hitting, kicking, theft)
- **Verbal** (name calling, racist comments, threats, sexist comments, homophobic comments)
- **Indirect** (spreading rumours, exclusion from social groups)
- **Cyber bullying** (Cyber bullying can be defined as the 'use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else' - DFE Definition)
- **Hate crimes/hate incidents** (any criminal offence or incident motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability; transgender or perceived transgender. (Anti-bullying alliance guidance, 2017)

Bullying and Child-on-child Abuse are acted out through the following mediums:

- **Verbal**
- **Physical**
- **Online (cyberbullying)**

Discriminatory abuse relating to ethnicity: Abuse towards a person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Discriminatory abuse relating to culture: Abuse towards a person based on the culture they consider themselves to be part of, including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller groups.

Discriminatory abuse relating to identity and orientation: Abusing another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation, including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse. The latter can include abuse relating to a person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Discriminatory abuse relating to gender: Abuse based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Gender discrimination bullying may also include inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Discriminatory Abuse relating to religion: abuse towards a person that dismisses, is judgemental of or insulting due to their religious beliefs.

Discriminatory Abuse relating to SEND: Abuse that focuses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability, including a person's mental health need.

Sexual harassment: refers to any sexual behaviour that could violate another child's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment, including:

- Sexualised jokes, taunting or comments.
- Physical behaviour, e.g. deliberately brushing against someone.
- Online sexual harassment, including:
 - Upskirting
 - Sexualised online bullying
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media. Sexual threats or coercion.

The 'sharing of sexualised imagery' can also constitute sexual harassment – this refers to the consensual and non-consensual sharing between pupils of sexually explicit content, including that which depicts:

- Another child posing nude or semi-nude
- Another child touching themselves in a sexual way
- Any sexual activity involving another child

- Someone hurting another child sexually.

Sexual Violence: “Sexual violence” encompasses the definitions provided in the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, i.e. non-consensual sexual touching, and causing another child to engage in sexual activity without consent, e.g. forcing someone to touch themselves sexually.

Intimate Partner Abuse: Abuse that exists within a relationship. This can include verbal and/or physical abuse and/or coercive and controlling behaviour. It can also include behaviour that humiliates or intimidates the victim.

Verbal abuse: Any abuse that intimidates, emotionally harms or threatens a person. This can include making written comments. Verbal abuse can include excluding and isolating another person or attempting to negatively influence other people’s opinions about the victim.

Online abuse: any behaviour online that intimidates, emotionally harms or threatens a person on an online platform or via the internet, which can include excluding and isolating another person or attempting to negatively influence other people’s opinions about the victim. Staff will be aware that children creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of other children is a criminal offense, even where the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed with the permission of the child depicted, or by the child themselves. Incidents of sharing sexualised imagery will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Physical abuse: inflicting pain or harm towards a person. This can include marking, spitting or cutting of hair.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be intentional and include:

- **An imbalance of power:** Young people who bully, use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- i. Pupils who are adopted.
- ii. Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- iii. Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- iv. Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- v. Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:
 - vi. Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
 - vii. Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils.
 - viii. Pupils with SEND.

At Meare Village Primary School, we are aware that pupils may be bullied in any school or 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.

In line with the Equality Act 2010 it is essential that our school:

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimization and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;

- Advances equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Fosters good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

At Meare Village Primary School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. This policy is linked with our Behaviour Policy, our Safeguarding Policy, our School Rules and the school's Vision, Aims and Values.

Bullying Prevention

A school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. The best schools develop a more sophisticated approach in which school staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to pupils about issues of difference, perhaps in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies.

Preventative strategies

The school will use a range of preventative strategies including:

- Promoting & rewarding good behaviour.
- Creating a respectful and tolerant environment within each classroom.
- Maintaining a positive and attractive school environment.
- Working as a school on the development of pupils' social and emotional skills (this may be individual support, small-group work or whole class work).
- Rewarding and celebrating the use of good social skills.
- Developing peer support methods.
- Revisiting the subject of Anti-Bullying every year with an intense focus during anti-bullying week.
- Anticipating problems / analysing problems and providing tailored support.
- Constantly and consistently relating all positive & negative behaviour to the School Charter of rules.
- Listening to pupils (every class will have a worry box/doll or age-appropriate method of reporting concerns about bullying).

We will use the curriculum and support agencies whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour, especially through PSHE lessons, Circle Time, SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) Work, Anti-Bullying Week activities each year (November), Social Skills Groups working with Teaching Assistants & ELSA support, and support from outside agencies.

Successful schools also:

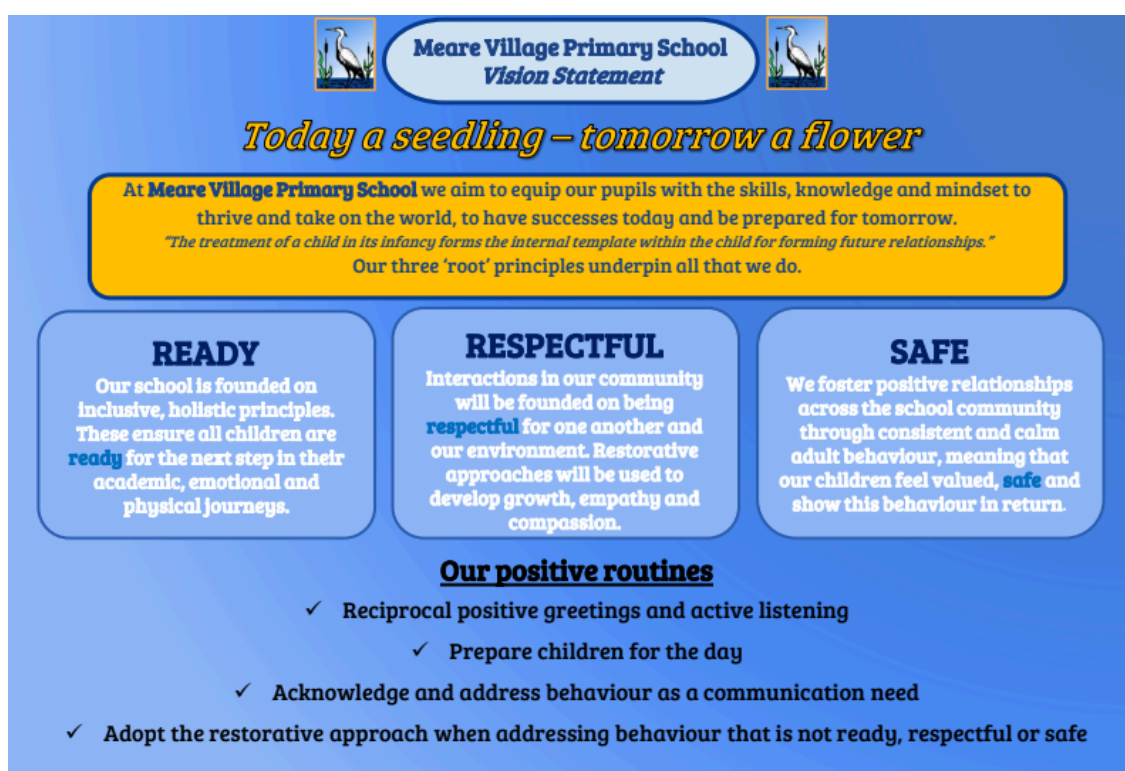
- Involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents should feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. They can also reinforce the value of good behaviour at home. **Parents can find information and support in Appendix 1**

- Involve pupils. All pupils should understand the school's approach and be clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders (**See it - Say it - Stop it**)
- Regularly evaluate and update their approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers

- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. Schools can also teach children that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable
- Use specific organisations or resources for help with certain issues. Schools can draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying, e.g. NSPCC.
- Provide effective staff training. Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.

School Values

Our School Values are regularly promoted in assemblies and displayed throughout the school. Through pupils following these values, and staff reinforcing them, bullying should be significantly reduced.



The graphic is a blue-bordered box with a light blue background. At the top, it features two small images of a white egret standing in water, flanking the text 'Meare Village Primary School Vision Statement'. Below this is the title 'Today a seedling – tomorrow a flower' in a stylized, italicized font. A yellow box contains the school's mission statement and a quote: 'At Meare Village Primary School we aim to equip our pupils with the skills, knowledge and mindset to thrive and take on the world, to have successes today and be prepared for tomorrow. "The treatment of a child in its infancy forms the internal template within the child for forming future relationships." Our three 'root' principles underpin all that we do.' Below the yellow box are three rounded rectangular boxes, each representing a principle: 'READY', 'RESPECTFUL', and 'SAFE'. Each box contains a brief description of the principle. At the bottom, the text 'Our positive routines' is followed by a list of four bullet points, each starting with a checkmark.

**Meare Village Primary School
Vision Statement**

Today a seedling – tomorrow a flower

At Meare Village Primary School we aim to equip our pupils with the skills, knowledge and mindset to thrive and take on the world, to have successes today and be prepared for tomorrow.
"The treatment of a child in its infancy forms the internal template within the child for forming future relationships."
 Our three 'root' principles underpin all that we do.

READY
 Our school is founded on inclusive, holistic principles. These ensure all children are **ready** for the next step in their academic, emotional and physical journeys.

RESPECTFUL
 Interactions in our community will be founded on being **respectful** for one another and our environment. Restorative approaches will be used to develop growth, empathy and compassion.

SAFE
 We foster positive relationships across the school community through consistent and calm adult behaviour, meaning that our children feel valued, **safe** and show this behaviour in return.

Our positive routines

- ✓ Reciprocal positive greetings and active listening
- ✓ Prepare children for the day
- ✓ Acknowledge and address behaviour as a communication need
- ✓ Adopt the restorative approach when addressing behaviour that is not ready, respectful or safe

Behaviour Policy

Our Behaviour Policy includes rewards and sanctions which are used consistently, alongside positive relationships, to prevent inappropriate behaviour, and promote positive behaviour.

Responding to and Recording Bullying

All cases of alleged bullying should be reported to the Headteacher/Senior Teacher. In any case of alleged bullying, either the Class teacher, the Headteacher, or a senior member of staff should first establish the facts, and build an accurate picture of events over time, through speaking to the alleged perpetrator(s), victim(s) and adult witnesses, as well as parents and pupil witnesses if necessary and appropriate.

If the allegation of bullying is upheld, the Headteacher will carry out the 'Peer Support Group Method' (see Appendix 2).

All recordings of a bullying incident should be recorded onto the '**Peer Support Method Recording Form**' (see **Appendix 3**) and uploaded onto CPOMS under the perpetrators name. Any further incidents should lead to intervention (e.g. through outside agencies), further monitoring, support and punitive sanctions as deemed necessary. Any necessary action should be taken until the bullying has stopped.

Appendix 1

Information and support for schools & parents

Kidscape

- Website with information and resources relating to bullying and other child protection issues

UK Safer Internet Centre

- Website with information and resources relating to e-safety and cyberbullying
- Helpline operated by the UK Safer Internet Centre offering professionals who work with children across the UK support, advice and mediation with online safety issues. The helpline can be contacted by email: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk or telephone on **0844 3814772** (calls on this number are charged at local call rate).

Childnet

- Website with information and advice for teachers and resources suitable for primary and secondary age pupils relating to e-safety and cyberbullying.

Childline

- 24 hour helpline for children and young people with concerns about bullying **0800 11 11**
- Online support for children and young people with concerns about bullying
- Website with information about bullying including a new short video to build the confidence of children that have been bullied.

Get Connected

- Helpline for children and young people under 25 - **0808 808 4994**. Also a text, email and web chat facility.

The Diana Award (Anti-Bullying Programme)

- Website available to all with information, advice and good practice for young people, professionals and parents.

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

- Website with information and resources for children and young people about staying safe online www.thinkyouknow.org.uk

Family Lives

- 24 hour helpline for parents and carers that have concerns about bullying **0808 800 2222**. They also have an email facility.

Contact a family

- Free helpline for parents and carers of disabled children that have concerns about bullying **0808 808 3355**.
- Free advice guides and training for parents and carers relating to bullying
- Network of parent support groups

Peer Support Group Method

Step one - meeting the victim

When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened he or she starts by talking to the victim about their feelings. The teacher does not question them about the incidents but does need to know who was involved. (This information is passed onto the Headteacher).

The Headteacher will meet the victim and ensure that the incident actually is bullying. They will then ask the child how it is making them **FEEL**, using their own words, which is ***the most powerful part of this method***. They will then ask them if they would like the Headteacher to sort out the problem, assuring them that they won't have to meet / confront the bully.

Step two - convene a meeting with the people involved

The Headteacher arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include the bully themselves, some bystanders or colluders and even friends of the victim who were there but did not initiate any bullying. The unkind pupils will be outnumbered by 'Good Citizens' who are chosen carefully by the class teacher to ensure success. A group of six to eight young people works well. The victim is **NOT** present.

Step three - explain the problem

The Headteacher tells the group about the way the victim is feeling and will use the victim's own words, and possibly one of the child's poems, pieces of writing or a drawing to emphasise their distress. At **no** time does the Headteacher discuss the details of the incidents or allocate **blame** to any member of the group. This is the most powerful time, because the pupils are hearing it from the point of view of someone like them.

Step four - share responsibility

The Headteacher does not attribute blame but states that he knows that some people in the group know about the issue and that they can **all** help to do **something** about it.

Step five - ask the group for their ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier, usually starting with positive examples from the 'Good Citizens'. The Headteacher gives some positive responses but does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step six - leave it up to them

The Headteacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. He arranges to meet with them again in one week to see how things are going, saying that he will check with the victim to see how they are feeling.

Step seven - meet them again

About a week later the Headteacher meets the victim again to see how the situation has improved – in nearly every case there will have been a dramatic improvement, as the victim now has a 'support group' around them which has promised to do certain things to improve their lives, e.g. smile at them, let them join in their games, etc. He also meets with the main group to give them feedback on the improvements and asks for further suggestions of how things can be made better for the victim if certain members of the group are not pulling their weight. This

APPENDIX 3: Reporting Form – Peer Support Group Method

Name of Victim:

Date of first meeting:

(Talk and listen to the victim: explain the method, gain permission to use it, discuss who will make up the support group and what they will be told)

What form has the bullying taken?

Who are the bullies?

How does the victim feel? (to understand the pain felt by the victim)

Would the victim like to produce a piece of writing or a picture to illustrate their unhappiness?

How did that make the group feel when hearing this?

How can the support group improve the situation?

Pupil	Suggestions
Bullies: a) b)	
Who else watched/knows? c) d)	

'Good Citizens' (who would want to help?) e) f) g)	
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NB – non bullies out-number the bullies.

Monitoring meeting 1 week later: _____ (date)

Headteacher speaks to victim and all in the group.

