

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statutory or non-statutory	Non Statutory
Reviewed by	Headteacher
Policy review date	December 2023
Date of next review	December 2026

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Branfil.

Bullying is defined by the DfE (July 2017) as:

... 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, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

This definition is helpful to school staff and parents / carers as it discriminates clearly between those everyday incidents where children are still learning to be social beings and those incidents which are pre-meditated and patterned victimisation.

Safeguarding children and young people

DfE guidance (2017) states that:

when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and report their concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. However, external support can be given to pupils whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Aims

At Branfil, we aim to:

- involve parents/carers 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.
- ensure parents/carers feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home
- ensure all pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders
- regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers
- implement disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable
- openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference; also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities
- teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable
- use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems, drawing 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
- provide effective staff training so 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
- work with the wider community, such as the police and children's services, to agree a clearly understood approach to cases where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed
- work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school
- make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on

- ensure pupils know that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school, including cyber-bullying
- create an inclusive environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination
- celebrate success since this is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.

Prevention

Branfil's response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. 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 involves talking to pupils about issues of difference in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, and through assemblies. Staff determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.

At Branfil we have an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

We have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour:

1. Curriculum/whole school strategies

- Ensuring that the school actively promotes the celebration of difference and diversity as part of the core values
- RSE/PSHE/Citizenship lessons, focus days and cross curriculum themes including work on challenging prejudice- related language and behaviour and challenging unconscious bias
- Celebration events
- Anti-bullying Week annually in November
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as cyberbullying and internet safety
- Pupil Voice (e.g. pupil surveys)
- School Parliament
- Peer Mentors
- OPAL Ambassadors
- Visits from external agencies (e.g. NSPCC)
- Modelling of positive relationships
- Staff and pupils are actively encouraged and supported to challenge prejudice related behaviour relating to all protected characteristics and vulnerable groups
- Ensuring that images and materials used reflect all groups in British society

2. Reactive programmes for vulnerable groups or groups involved in bullying

- Counselling and/or mediation schemes from trained staff and outside agencies
- Mentoring from trained staff

- Small group work
- Restorative Justice meetings

3. Support for parents/carers

- Information distributed by email, newsletters, the school website and social media
- Information available at All About My Child meetings
- Information sessions e.g. online safety
- Parent/carer & child workshops

4. Support for all school staff:

- Staff training and development for all staff, including those involved in lunchtime and before and after school activities
- Staff training around curriculum delivery of RSE related curriculum areas
- Anti-bullying Alliance online training modules for all staff

What does bullying look like?

Bullying behavior can be:

- Physical - pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional - isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber - posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- Indirect - can include the exploitation of individuals such as false friendships, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and radicalization.

Although bullying can occur between individuals, it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others, who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people
- young people and staff
- staff members
- individuals or groups

Behaviour often associated with bullying

• **Baiting**

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretly to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get into trouble.

- **Banter**

The dictionary describes banter as 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'. Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.

Types of banter:

- friendly banter- there is no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits
- ignorant banter- crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry
- malicious banter- done to humiliate a person, often in public.

Specific types of bullying include:

- **Child on Child Abuse**

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

We will challenge and respond to any concerns related to the above. For more information, see our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

- **Sexist and Sexual bullying**

Sexual Harassment - unwanted contact of a sexual nature which can occur on and offline. This behaviour is considered to violate a child's dignity and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

This needs to be considered by cross referencing with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy but the initial response from staff will be the same as any reported bullying incident and dealt with in a contextual way.

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 and child on child abuse. If the target or alleged perpetrator might be in danger, then intervention is urgently required, including a safeguarding referral.

- **Prejudice Related Bullying**

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a trans person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, including Gypsy, Roma, Traveller heritage
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex /gender
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

Other vulnerable groups include:

- young carers
- looked after children
- bullying related to home circumstances
- bullying related to appearance or health

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. We have a designated lead for looked after children who will liaise with staff and children to ensure that they are supported and know where to go for help.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour, including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident.

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are perceived to be different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers are perceived to be different.

Dismissing such language as banter is not helpful as it is being used to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

- **Hate crime and bullying**

There is no legal definition of a hate crime. However, the police and the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) have an agreed definition of [hate crime](#) as: "*Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be 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 and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender."

There is a distinction between a hate crime and a hate incident. "A *hate incident* is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender."

However, a hate incident does not necessarily break the law. Where a hate incident amounts to a criminal offence, and is based on one of the protected characteristics, it is known as a hate crime. The type of conduct which will be considered as a hate incident is wide ranging and includes the following:

- verbal abuse;
- harassment;
- bullying or intimidation;
- physical attacks;
- threats of violence;
- hoax calls, abusive phone or text messages, hate mail;
- online abuse;
- displaying or circulating discriminatory literature or posters;
- graffiti;
- arson;
- throwing rubbish in a garden; and
- malicious complaints.

Any concerns about hate incidents/crimes should be discussed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Information on how to report a hate crime can be found at <https://www.report-it.org.uk/home>

Children can report any crime anonymously at <https://www.fearless.org/>.

- **Cyber bullying**

We embrace the advantages of modern technology in terms of the educational benefits it brings, however, the school is mindful of the potential for bullying to occur.

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself. By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat rooms.

It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites. Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

At Branfil we aim to educate our pupils both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through PSHE and computing lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate our pupils in these fast changing areas.

Through the use of LGfL software, the school endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems. Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, we reserve the right to take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying.

All members of the school community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Headteacher any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

Under powers granted by the EIA 2006, the Headteacher is able to police cyber-bullying or any bullying aspects carried out by pupils, even at home.

The DfE (2017) states that:

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

See Appendix 1: Guidance for staff and parent/carers on dealing with cyber bullying.

Bullying concerns

Where parents/carers are concerned that their child is a bully, or is being bullied, they should be reassured that the school will take their concerns seriously. Where bullying takes place this is dealt with swiftly and decisively. All allegations of bullying are investigated thoroughly and a record made on My Concern. Parents/carers of both the alleged perpetrator and the alleged victim are informed of the outcome of the investigation. In all instances, it is made clear that such practices are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Intervention – support for pupils who are bullied

School staff will always support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, asking specific staff members to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with

parents/carers, referring to local authority children's services, completing a Multi-Agency Referral Form or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Intervention - Discipline and tackling underlying issues of bullying

The overall school behaviour policy will usually be sufficient to deal with day-to-day problems occurring in the classroom and on the playground. Strategies are employed to minimise the opportunities for children to fall into a pattern of poor behaviour; the high number of empowered adults employed by the school to supervise the playing areas; the availability of playground equipment and supervised activities for the children.

Disciplinary measures are applied to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. The motivations behind bullying behaviour are also considered and whether this reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator; where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

Details of various specialist agencies that can provide support to school staff and parents/carers are detailed in appendix 2.

Bullying which occurs outside school premises

The DfE (2017) states that:

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

Review and monitoring of this policy

This policy will be monitored through the receipt of incident reports on My Concern. The number of incidents of bullying is reported the Governing Body each term. Review will take place as often as is necessary through the process of monitoring and the development of internal and external good practices; as a minimum, it will follow a three-year review cycle.

Links with other policies

- Behaviour
- Equality
- Online Safety
- Relationships & Sex Education
- Safeguarding & Child Protection

APPENDIX 1

Guidance for staff on dealing with Cyber Bullying

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

- **Mobile Phones**
 - Ask the pupil to show you the mobile phone
 - Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
 - Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
 - Tell the pupil to save the message/image
 - Go with the pupil and see the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team

- **Computers**
 - Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question
 - Ask the pupil to save the material
 - Print off the offending material straight away
 - Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions
 - Accompany the pupil, taking the offending material, to see the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team

Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

Guidance for parents and carers on dealing with Cyber Bullying

It is vital that parents/carers and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously we take incidents of cyber-bullying

If parents/carers believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything. Parents/carers should contact the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged, which may involve other relevant members of staff.

APPENDIX 2

Specialist organisations

The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues including the social, mental or emotional affects caused by bullying.

- The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.
- The ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed here.
- The Diana Award: Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.
- Kidscape: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.
- The BIG Award: The Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively.
- Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

Cyber-bullying and online safety

- ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. Website specifically includes new cyberbullying guidance and a practical PSHE toolkit for schools.
- Digizen: provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.
- Internet Matters: provides help to keep children safe in the digital world.
- Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced a range of resources for schools, colleges and parents about how to keep children safe online, this includes advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of 'sexting.'

LGBT

- Barnardos: through its LGBTQ Hub, offers guidance to young people, parents and teachers on how to support LGBT students and tackle LGBT prejudice-based bullying
- EACH: (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.
- Metro Charity: an equality and diversity charity, providing health, community and youth services across London, the South East, national and international projects. Metro works with anyone experiencing issues related to gender, sexuality, diversity or identity
- Proud Trust: helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities through youth groups, peer support, delivering of training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources.

- Schools Out: Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.
- Stonewall: An LGB equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGB bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

SEND

- Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.
- Changing Faces: Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.
- Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice.
- Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources: Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.
- Information, Advice and Support Service Network: Every Local area has an information, advice and support service, providing information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents.

Mental Health

- MindEd: Provides a free online training tool for adults that is also available to schools. It can be used to help school staff learn more about children and young people's mental health problems. It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information on identifying, understanding and supporting children who are bullied.
- PSHE Association – guidance and lesson plans on improving the teaching of mental health issues

Race, Religion and Nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: Runs a school's project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.
- Educate Against Hate: provides teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.
- Show Racism the Red Card: Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.
- Kick It Out: Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.
- Tell MAMA: Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks (MAMA) allows people from across England to report any form of Anti-Muslim abuse, MAMA can also refer victims for support through partner agencies.
- Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group: Independent members of this group are representatives from the Muslim community and will assist and advice on all relevant issues.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support

education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse.

- Disrespect No Body: a Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is. This website includes teaching materials to be used in the classroom.
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying.