Potters Green Primary

Anti-bullying Policy

Local Level Policy

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Committee approved by	Potters Green LGB
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Anti-bullying Policy

This policy has regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* (KCSIE 2026), *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (2017), *Behaviour in Schools* and *Searching, Screening and Confiscation*. It should be read alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and other linked policies. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility; all decisions under this policy will be child-centred and made in the best interests of the child.

1. Policy Objectives

- This policy outlines what Potters Green School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- Potters Green School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

2. Links with Other School Policies and Practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans, including:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Curriculum policies, such as RSE/RSHE and PSHE
- Online Safety Policy, including mobile and smart technology and social media

3. 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:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)
- Behaviour in Schools and Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006, including the school's power to regulate conduct outside school
- The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988 and Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986

4. Definition of Bullying

- Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another person physically or emotionally. A single incident may still be serious and will be addressed under the Behaviour Policy and, where relevant, safeguarding procedures.

- Bullying may include name-calling, taunting, threats, intimidation, exclusion, spreading rumours, damage to or taking belongings, physical aggression and prejudice-based or discriminatory behaviour.
- Bullying can occur face to face or online, inside or outside school, and may be perpetrated by an individual or group. Online behaviour may include harmful messages, images, videos, impersonation, exclusion from online groups, sharing private information or encouraging others to target a child.
- Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence. It will not be tolerated or passed off as banter, having a laugh, part of growing up or boys being boys.
- The absence of reports does not mean that bullying or child-on-child abuse is not happening. Staff will remain professionally curious, recognise barriers that may prevent children from reporting and provide safe, accessible ways to seek help.
- Children may experience harm outside the home, including online and within peer groups, the local community or intimate relationships. Staff will consider contextual and extra-familial factors when assessing risk.
- All children involved will be treated as children first and offered appropriate, proportionate support. The school will avoid language that blames or criminalises a child who may have been harmed, coerced or exploited.

5. Forms and Types of Bullying Covered by this Policy

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 or mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying or harassment
- Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, including bullying related to race, religion, faith, belief, ethnicity, nationality, culture, SEND, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy and maternity.

6. School Ethos

Potters Green School recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals, create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, the school can help create a safe and disciplined environment where pupils can learn and fulfil their potential.

Our Community

- Understands the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers.
- Monitors and reviews anti-bullying policy and practice regularly.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of the community, including children with SEND, may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact.
- Intervenes by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures pupils know that concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.
- Requires all community members to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Works in partnership with parents and carers and keeps them informed at all stages, where appropriate.
- Deals promptly with grievances regarding the school response in line with the complaints policy.
- Learns from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and uses Local Authority or other relevant support where appropriate.

7. Responding to Bullying Concerns

- Any suspected or reported bullying will be taken seriously. Staff will listen carefully, avoid promising confidentiality, make an accurate record using the child's own words where possible, and act without delay.
- The immediate safety and welfare of the child will be considered first. Appropriate support and safety planning will be put in place, with the child's wishes and views taken into account wherever possible.
- All concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy without delay. If the DSL or deputy is unavailable, staff will not delay appropriate action. In an emergency, or where a child is in immediate danger, the police will be contacted on 999.
- The DSL will decide whether the concern should be managed under the Behaviour Policy, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, or both. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and, where appropriate, the police.
- A proportionate, child-centred risk and needs assessment will consider the child who has been harmed, the child alleged to have caused harm, other children, the location and context of the incident, and any online or extra-familial risks. It will be reviewed as circumstances change.
- Children will be spoken to separately by appropriately trained staff. They will not be required to confront one another, apologise, mediate or take part in restorative work where this would be unsafe, inappropriate or contrary to the wishes and welfare of the child who has been harmed.
- Records will include a clear summary of the concern, actions taken, decisions made, the reasons for those decisions and outcomes. Safeguarding records will be kept securely and separately from the main pupil file in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis. Data protection law will not be treated as a barrier to sharing information necessary to safeguard a child.
- Parents and carers will normally be informed and involved unless doing so may place a child at greater risk, prejudice a safeguarding enquiry or conflict with advice from statutory agencies.
- Support and any disciplinary response will be proportionate, lawful and consistent with the Behaviour and Child Protection and Safeguarding policies. Support will be considered for all affected children, including witnesses and children who may have caused harm.
- Where needs emerge, the school will consider community-based early help, targeted Family Help and referrals to relevant statutory or specialist services.
- Incidents outside school, including online incidents, will be considered where they affect pupils' welfare, the orderly running of the school or relationships within the school community. The school will work with parents, other settings, online providers, the local authority and police as appropriate.

Child-on-child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Any report of sexual harassment, sexual violence or harmful sexual behaviour will be managed under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE 2026. Staff will reassure the child that they are being taken seriously and are not to blame, will not promise confidentiality, and will report the concern immediately to the DSL or a deputy. The DSL will complete and keep under review a proportionate risk and needs assessment, consider referral to children's social care and/or the police, and ensure that the child who has reported harm and the child alleged to have caused harm can continue their education safely. The wishes of the child who has reported harm will be considered, but the school may need to act where this is necessary to protect them or others.

Cyberbullying

- Respond promptly to online bullying and follow the same safeguarding and reporting procedures as for incidents occurring in person.
- Support the child who has been harmed and assess risks arising from the content, audience, platform, persistence, anonymity and potential for further sharing.

- Ask children not to delete relevant material and preserve evidence where safe to do so, for example screenshots, URLs, usernames, dates and times. Staff will not view or forward illegal images of children; these will be managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures and current UKCIS guidance.
- Take proportionate steps to identify those responsible, which may include reviewing school systems, speaking with witnesses and seeking advice from the DSL, police or relevant provider.
- Support reporting, blocking and removal of harmful content, while recognising that removal may need to be coordinated with police or children's social care so that evidence is not compromised.
- Any search of a pupil or electronic device will be lawful, necessary and proportionate and carried out only by authorised staff in line with current DfE guidance and the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Where sexual imagery is involved, staff will immediately refer to the DSL and follow the school's safeguarding procedures and current guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes. Staff will not print, copy, save or share imagery unless specifically directed by the DSL or police.
- The police will be informed where a criminal offence may have been committed or where there is an immediate risk of harm.
- Pupils will be advised not to retaliate and will be supported to use privacy, reporting and blocking tools safely.

Support for Children Who Have Been Bullied

- An immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Reassurance and continuous support from a designated member of staff
- Support to restore self-esteem and self-confidence
- Referral to a Peer Mentor, where available and appropriate
- Referral to the inclusion team
- Continuous support and advice for parents
- Information about the outcome of the investigation

Support for Children Who May Have Bullied Others

- Exploring what happened, the context and any unmet need, vulnerability, coercion or exploitation
- Making clear that the behaviour is unacceptable, while avoiding unnecessary criminalisation or stigmatising language
- Providing education, supervision, pastoral support and a plan to reduce the risk of recurrence
- Involving parents or carers where appropriate and safe
- Considering support from the inclusion team, community-based early help, targeted Family Help or specialist services

Sanctions

Where a pupil has bullied another child, the school will apply a proportionate, fair and consistent response in accordance with the Behaviour Policy. Safeguarding support and disciplinary action may run alongside one another. Suspension or permanent exclusion will be considered only in line with statutory guidance and the Trust's procedures; the decision will take account of the individual circumstances, including age, SEND, vulnerability and whether the child may also have been harmed, coerced or exploited. Police involvement will be considered where an offence may have been committed.

8. Preventing Bullying

Environment

- Create and support an inclusive environment promoting mutual respect, consideration and care.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any community member, including adults and children.

- Recognise the potential for pupils with SEND to be disproportionately affected and provide additional pastoral support where required.
- Recognise that bullying may be influenced by gender, age, ability and culture.
- Openly discuss differences that could motivate bullying, including family circumstances, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality and appearance.
- Challenge practice and language, including banter, that does not uphold tolerance, non-discrimination and respect.
- Encourage positive and responsible use of technology, mobile phones and social media.
- Work with staff, the wider community and external agencies to prevent and tackle all forms of prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Create safe spaces for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievement to build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

- Provide a range of ways for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate practice in response to developments in technology.
- Take proportionate and reasonable action for bullying involving pupils, including where it occurs off-site, on transport or online.
- Implement sanctions reflecting the seriousness of the incident.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

- Train all staff to identify all forms of bullying, take appropriate action, and record and report incidents.
- Address bullying through the curriculum, displays, assemblies, peer support and the Junior Leadership Team.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings, including during transition.
- Maintain a high profile for anti-bullying throughout the year, including Anti-Bullying Week.
- Provide systematic opportunities for pupils to develop social and emotional skills and self-esteem.

9. Involvement of Pupils

- Involve pupils in decision-making so they understand the school approach and their role in prevention.
- Regularly canvas pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure pupils know how to express worries and anxieties.
- Ensure pupils understand the range of sanctions that may be applied.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns and embed messages across the curriculum.
- Use pupil voice to provide pupil-led education and support.
- Publicise internal support as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying.

10. Involvement and Liaison with Parents and Carers

- Involve parents and carers in developing policy and procedures and make clear that bullying is not tolerated.
- Make key information on prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying available in accessible formats, including on the school website.
- Ensure parents and carers know who to contact and where to obtain independent advice.
- Work with families and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates.
- Encourage parents and carers to model positive behaviour online and offline.
- Ensure parents and carers know how to use the complaints procedure effectively.

11. Monitoring and Review: Putting Policy into Practice

- The school will monitor the frequency, nature, location and patterns of reported bullying, including online, prejudice-based and discriminatory incidents, while protecting confidentiality.
- Leaders will evaluate the timeliness and effectiveness of responses, the support provided, recurrence and pupils' views, and will use findings to inform safeguarding, behaviour, curriculum, staff training and school improvement planning.
- The headteacher and DSL will maintain oversight of safeguarding-related concerns and ensure that emerging themes are recognised and acted upon.
- The Local Governing Body will receive regular, appropriately anonymised information about incidents, trends, actions and outcomes and will review this policy at least annually, or sooner where guidance, legislation or local risks change.

12. Complaints

If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the nature or speed of the school's response to a reported incident, they may make a complaint. The complaints procedure follows the Trust's Complaints Policy. Concerns should be handled informally where possible; where informal procedures are unsuccessful and the complainant wishes to proceed, formal measures will be taken.

13. Equal Opportunities

In implementing this policy, all staff must take account of the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy and the Equality Act 2010. No child involved in an incident of bullying will be disadvantaged or treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic or other aspect of identity or circumstance. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled pupils and pupils with SEND, including adjustments to reporting routes, communication, investigation and support.

14. Useful Links and Supporting Organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline - www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives - www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape - www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd - www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC - www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association - www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council - www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award - www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support - www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds - www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers - www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet - www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation - www.iwf.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content - reportharmfulcontent.com
- UK Safer Internet Centre - www.saferinternet.org.uk
- UK Council for Internet Safety - www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety

SEND

- Changing Faces - www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap - www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: cyberbullying and children and young people with SEND
- DfE SEND Code of Practice

Race, Religion and Nationality

- Anne Frank Trust
- Kick It Out
- Report It
- Stop Hate
- Tell Mama
- Educate Against Hate
- Show Racism the Red Card

LGBTQ+

- Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub
- Metro Charity
- EACH
- Proud Trust
- Schools Out
- Stonewall

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
- Disrespect NoBody
- Anti-Bullying Alliance guidance on sexual and sexist bullying