

 **Ashdon Primary School**

 **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Date adopted by Governing Body**: February 2024

**Review date**: February 2025

**SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT**

Ashdon Primary School takes seriously the responsibility to protect the welfare of the children in its care, believing that “The welfare of the child is paramount” Children Act 1989.

This policy plays an integral part in our aim to safeguard the children and ensure their wellbeing in order to promote optimum development.

**Introduction**

All children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person’s life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people’s well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At Ashdon Primary School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Our school is a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

**Objectives of this Policy**

* To promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment or any type of bullying behaviour.
* All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
* All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, what they should do if bullying arises and follow procedures consistently.
* As a school, we take bullying very seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
* Create an ethos where bullying will not be tolerated.

**What is Bullying?**

*“Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying"* (Torfaen definition 2008). If bullying is allowed, it harms the perpetrator, the target, the whole school community and its culture of safety and wellbeing in the school.

**The Nature of Bullying**

Bullying generally takes one of four forms: Indirect, physical, verbal and cyber

* Indirect - being unfriendly, spreading rumours, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding bags or books)
* Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence
* Verbal - name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm
* Cyber - All areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms, postings and messages on social media sites and instant messaging. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
	+ Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

* Racial bullying
* Homophobic bullying
* Bullying based on disability, religion, sexism, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

* is frightened of walking to or from school
* doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
* begs to be driven to school
* changes their usual routine
* is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
* becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
* starts stammering
* attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
* cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
* feels ill in the morning
* begins to do poorly in school work
* comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
* has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
* asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
* has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
* has unexplained cuts or bruises
* comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)
* becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
* is bullying other children or siblings
* stops eating
* is frightened to say what's wrong
* gives improbable excuses for any of the above
* is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
* is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and must be investigated

**Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

* Bullying hurts.
* No one deserves to be bullied.
* Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
* Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.
* As a school we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

**Our Approach to Bullying**

We believe that if children are encouraged to be good citizens in an environment where they feel stimulated and excited by their learning, it will minimize the occurrence of bullying. We feel it is important to create an atmosphere where our children know that they will be listened to and where their problems and worries are taken seriously and responded to with sensitivity. Bullying is always unacceptable and always serious. We are committed to creating a safe environment where children can learn and play, can talk about their worries, confident that an adult will listen and will offer help.

**Prevention**

Through a variety of planned activities across the curriculum such as circle time, role-play, class performances, sharing assemblies, our children gain in self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions. Encouraging children to take responsibility by becoming a member of the School Council or becoming a play leader promotes children’s self-confidence.

In having this approach, we believe this helps to reduce a code of secrecy where children feel too scared to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences.

We will use some or all of the following to help raise awareness of and prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

* Writing and implementing a set of school and/or class rules
* Working with individual children to support them
* Anti-Bullying Week – working with national organisations
* Using art, drama or music to reinforce awareness
* Reading stories about bullying in class or assembly
* Having regular discussions about bullying and why it matters

Our Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum will ensure that each year group addresses issues related to bullying. This may take the form of an explicit approach or maybe implicit, in terms of looking at friendships and valuing each other, appreciating differences, to develop individual self-confidence. In addition to this, the issue of bullying in its many forms is the focus of circle time discussions.

**Dealing with incidents**

Incidences of bullying brought to the attention of the class teacher are investigated as soon as possible. Information is gathered from pupils and any staff concerned.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

* If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
* A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Headteacher who will then investigate the incident.
* The Headteacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident in the school’s Anti-Bullying log.
* Class teachers will be kept informed and if it persists the class teacher will advise the Headteacher.
* Parents will be kept informed – they may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss concerns.
* Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.
* Where required Individual Behaviour Plans to set targets to improve and monitor behaviour are set up which may involve calling upon the expertise of outside agencies.
* If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

* Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their class teacher or a member of staff of their choice.
* Reassuring the pupil.
* Offering continuous support.
* Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

* Discussing what happened.
* Discovering why the pupil became involved.
* Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change.
* Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

* Official warnings to cease offending.
* Internal school sanctions such as missing break or lunch times.
* Exclusion from certain areas of school premises.
* Arrangements for the parent/carer to supervise a pupil to and from school on a daily basis.
* Exclusion from the school premises at lunchtime.
* Minor fixed-term exclusion.
* Major fixed-term exclusion.
* Permanent exclusion.

**The Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. This will be done through a monitoring log and through the sample questionnaire which is conducted annually with pupils.

The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

The Governing Body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Governing Body notifies the Headteacher and asks her/ him to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the Governing Body.

**Monitoring, evaluation and review**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. To discover the extent to which bullying exists in school and to monitor the extent to which our Anti-Bullying Policy is effective, the log and strategies will be reviewed alongside the pupils’ questionnaires. The Anti-Bullying Policy is the governors’ responsibility and they review its effectiveness bi-annually. They do this by examining the school’s anti-bullying logbook and through discussion with the Headteacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation and any other characteristic/ background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

The school will review this policy bi-annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

**Help Organisations**

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Kidscape [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

Anti-Bullying Alliance [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Chair of Governors) Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_