



Anti-bullying Policy

A3

Dolphin School Trust
inc. Noah's Ark Nurseries

Reviewed by:	Lucy Price (Headteacher)
Last reviewed:	September 2025
Next review:	September 2027

1. Introduction

1.1. It is a Government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In order for the school to provide a safe environment, the security of all pupils must be ensured. The school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy (and Behaviour Management Policy – Noah's Ark) outline the parameters of expected behaviour and form the foundations of the Anti-Bullying Policy – these policies should be read thoroughly in conjunction with this policy. This policy is written in conjunction with the DfE Document *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*. The school works closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989.

1.2. Bullying is defined here as all behaviour (and especially a sustained pattern of behaviour) that is intended to threaten, frighten or cause pain to someone, causing him/her anxiety and distress. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (for example, being repeatedly ignored or not spoken to, or through cyber-technology).

1.3. Bullying can be physical or emotional and is often motivated by prejudice against a particular group, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

1.4. Pupils will often have access to technologies that have both positive and negative potential. The school takes its responsibility very seriously when considering the online safety of children both within the school setting and beyond. See the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and E-Safety Policy (including Acceptable Use Agreement) for further details of how this is carried out.

1.5. Bullying on the basis of protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously. Dolphin School is proactive in responding to bullying on the basis of protected characteristics. The use of racist language, for example, by pupils towards each other is not tolerated or dismissed as 'banter' but is tackled assertively (as bullying where appropriate) with a view to preventing it from happening again.

1.6. The school recognises that new forms of online harm may emerge, including exposure to misinformation, disinformation, extremist or conspiracy-based content, and AI-generated abuse. Staff remain vigilant in monitoring these risks and respond in accordance with the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and IT Acceptable Use Policy. Pupils are educated through PSHE/Relationship Time about safe, responsible, and respectful online behaviour.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1. Bullying is wrong and damages individual children either physically or emotionally (which may cause psychological damage). We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable by all. It is one of the fundamental values of Dolphin School and Noah's Ark Nurseries that all children are unique, that their uniqueness is highly prized and we promote respect for diverse cultures through Relationship Time, Assembly, and the example of our staff team and corridor culture.

2.2. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur and to reassure pupils and parents that the school will respond quickly and effectively.

2.3. We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

3. Pupils (from 2–11 years old)

3.1. Bullying behaviour can be displayed by children as young as 3 years old.

3.2. Bullying behaviour has four key aspects:

- It's hurtful
- It's intentional
- It's repetitive
- It involves a power imbalance

3.3. Staff at Dolphin School and Noah's Ark Nurseries are aware that challenging bullying behaviour gives the school a great opportunity to 'nip it in the bud'.

3.4. Staff encourage children to speak out if they think someone isn't being nice to them. Children are made to feel comfortable to come and tell their teacher/teaching assistant if they feel sad or worried.

3.5. Children are not labelled as a bully; rather, bullying behaviour is addressed. Positive behaviour is praised, as are positive interactions between children. Staff use Relationship Time, circle time, storytelling, books, and dolls to help children understand positive interactions.

3.6. Staff are quick to challenge stereotypes such as 'these are boys' toys' or other protected characteristics in a positive way. Staff are clear about how children should behave respectfully towards each other.

3.7. Staff are aware that they are role models to the children and each member of staff embodies the ethos of Dolphin School Trust which is other-centred and focused on developing godly character.

3.8. Parents are encouraged to read and be familiar with Dolphin School and Noah's Ark policies, so that they understand the school's approach to bullying and relational conflict. Staff communicate with parents frequently about their child's behaviour including reporting back on any incidents of potential bullying behaviour. Parents are also encouraged to look out for signs in case their child might be being bullied, and if they suspect anything, to report it to the class teacher and/or nursery school manager.

3.9. Children who have been the victims of bullying behaviour are supported by staff, and along with other less assertive children are encouraged to express their emotions clearly and calmly by saying "I don't like it when you do that" or "stop doing that – it's not nice".

3.10. Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), or those who may be more vulnerable (for example looked-after children, adopted children, or young carers), are at greater risk of experiencing bullying. Staff are trained to identify and support such pupils, and additional measures (including reasonable adjustments, pastoral support, and involvement of specialist services where appropriate) will be implemented to ensure these children are safeguarded.

4. The Role of Governors

4.1. The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The Governing Body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

4.2. The Governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying within the Bullying Log and to report to the Governors on request regarding the effectiveness of the school anti-bullying strategies.

4.3. A parent who is concerned about an issue regarding bullying must see the class teacher, with a member of the Senior Team if deemed necessary. The parent may then request a further meeting with one of the Senior Team, and they may specify that they wish to see the Headteacher. A strategy will be mutually agreed and monitored and a further meeting will be arranged. If the parent is dissatisfied with the way the strategies are working, they are encouraged to see the Headteacher again. If, following such a procedure, the parent remains dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident, they can ask the Chair of Governors or the Safeguarding Governor to look into the matter. The Governing Body aims to respond within ten days to any such request. In all cases the Governing Body notifies the Headteacher and asks them to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the Governing Body.

5. The Role of the Headteacher

5.1. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy of zero tolerance to any forms of bullying (including cyberbullying), are given suitable training, know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying, and are aware of their legal responsibility. The school understands the necessity of and agrees to provide training for all staff.

5.2. The Headteacher and Senior Team ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Senior Team draws the attention of children to this fact during Relationship Time, Assembly, and other opportunities.

5.3. The aim of the Headteacher is to ensure that bullying is identified quickly, that children involved are spoken to at once, and that consequences are clearly explained and swiftly administered. Various strategies may then be needed, for example speaking to parents of children involved. It is the Headteacher's responsibility that the children involved are closely monitored to ensure these incidents do not re-occur and to ensure that victims of bullying receive the appropriate support within and outside the classroom. Therefore, the school has a clear picture of bullying incidents throughout the school which are recorded.

5.4. The Headteacher uses every opportunity to pass on to pupils biblical principles regarding the treatment of other people, and clear practical guidance on how to apply such principles into daily life. It is the Headteacher's job to use Assembly and other opportunities to ensure that pupils are well aware that developing godly character, including putting others first, is a foundational aim of all Dolphin pupils.

5.5. All staff receive regular training in recognising, preventing, and responding to bullying, including online and prejudice-based bullying. This training is refreshed at least annually and updated in response to changes in statutory guidance (e.g. *Keeping Children Safe in Education*). Records of staff training are maintained and monitored by the Senior Team PA.

6. The Role of Teachers and Support Staff

6.1. All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place. This includes all types of bullying, including cyberbullying, whether it is in school or outside of school.

6.2. Teachers record on Engage all incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will investigate it themselves and refer it to the Senior Team, as described in Section 4.3.

6.3. Any adults who witness an act of bullying of Dolphin School or Noah's Ark children should report it to a member of the Senior Team and the incident should be recorded on Engage.

6.4. When any bullying takes place between pupils, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately, reporting to the Senior Team, or will report the incident to the Senior Team for further action. Our approach involves talking to all concerned. Time is spent talking to the child who has bullied, explaining why his/her action was wrong, and that child is given strategies to change behaviour in future. Time is spent talking to the victim of bullying, learning details of events leading to the incident and the incident itself. The children's parents are informed and invited to discuss the situation with members of the Senior Team. Sanctions are given as appropriate. Support is then provided on an ongoing basis, with careful monitoring by class teacher and Senior Team, and liaison with parents. In more extreme cases, where initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies.

6.5. Teachers may use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They may use drama, role-play, stories and/or discussion especially during Relationship Time (RT) to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, to analyse the impact of their own behaviour and to discuss ways to practise kindness and grow self-discipline. RT is used to talk about relationships in the class and children are encouraged to discuss honestly where others' behaviour has caused them distress or discomfort. RT is also used to praise, reward and celebrate positive relationships, godly behaviour and other-centred attitudes. As part of RT and at all times in school, pupils are taught about the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.

6.6. Any sanctions applied as a result of bullying incidents will be consistent with the school's Behaviour Management Policy. Sanctions are proportionate, age-appropriate, and applied fairly, with a focus on education and restoration as well as discipline.

7. The Role of Parents

7.1. Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact one of the Senior Team. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's Complaints Procedure.

7.2. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, actively encouraging their child to adhere to the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

7.3. The school is committed to working with parents and involving them in situations that arise.

7.4. This policy is made available to parents on the school website and is highlighted at induction. Parents are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the school's approach to bullying and how to raise concerns.

8. The Role of Pupils

8.1. Pupils are encouraged to tell their class teacher if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues after adult involvement, they must speak to the class teacher again.

8.2. Pupils are invited to tell their class teacher their views about a range of school issues including bullying in Relationship Time. The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their age, are aware of the part that they play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

8.3. Pupils have access to 'ask it baskets' in each classroom. These boxes allow children to convey any concerns (including bullying) with their teacher without needing to speak directly to the class teacher. Further help can then be offered to the child.

8.4. The school ensures that pupils understand the Anti-Bullying Policy through age-appropriate teaching in PSHE, Relationship Time, and assemblies. Pupils are regularly reminded of how to report concerns, including through "ask it baskets" and direct communication with staff.

9. Where Does Bullying Happen?

9.1. It can happen anywhere - in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, on the common, etc. Bullying may also happen outside school. In such cases, the Headteacher is empowered by law to deal with such incidents "to such an extent as is reasonable" (paragraph 23, section 90 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) and in accordance with the school's policy.

9.2. At Dolphin School and Noah's Ark we are concerned with our children's conduct and welfare outside, as well as inside school, and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises. The following steps may be taken:

- The Headteacher will talk to the local Community Police Officer about a specific problem outside the school premises.

- The Headteacher will talk to the Heads of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the school premises.
- Discuss coping strategies with parents.
- A member of the Senior Team will talk to children about how to handle, or avoid, bullying outside the school premises.

10. Signs and Symptoms

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

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- 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 underperform in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- comes home with their possessions missing
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- continually "loses" money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (snack has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

11. Safeguarding Children and Young People

11.1. 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 child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm". Where this is the case, staff should report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately who will refer the matter to Children and Family Services. 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 doing the bullying.

11.2. Bullying, including cyberbullying, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and harmful sexual behaviour, is recognised as a form of child-on-child abuse. All such incidents will be dealt with in line with the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*. Where bullying

involves sexualised behaviour, harmful online behaviour, or repeated coercion, it will be treated as a safeguarding matter and referred to the DSL without delay.

12. Monitoring and Review

12.1. This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to Governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

12.2. This anti-bullying policy is reviewed regularly by the Senior Team, who examine the nature of any bullying that has occurred, noting if it is racist, for example, or directed at certain children or happening for similar reasons.

12.3. In addition to maintaining individual records of bullying incidents, the Senior Team reviews bullying data on a termly basis to identify any emerging trends (for example, repeated incidents at certain times or locations, or patterns linked to protected characteristics). This analysis informs proactive strategies to prevent further incidents and is reported to Governors as part of safeguarding and welfare oversight.