



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## MAULDEN LOWER SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2025

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REVIEW DATE: AUTUMN 2027

## **Purpose**

At Maulden Lower School we strive to create a happy and safe learning environment, free from threat and harassment. As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to. Bullying will not be tolerated. As a school we promote values which will enable the children to play and work together in the spirit of respect, co-operation, trust and forgiveness.

## **Legal Framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Remote Education Policy

## **Aims and Objectives**

All of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our school is a safe place for children and adults to be; whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

Maulden Lower School Anti-Bullying Policy outlines what the school will do to prevent and tackle any aspects of bullying. This process is reflected in depth in our Behaviour Management Policy.

Bullying is wrong and damages individuals. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any alleged and witnessed bullying incidents that may occur. All members of the school community have the responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

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

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

### **What is Bullying?**

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **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.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Bullying is not a one off incident but dealing with an incident appropriately when it arises can prevent further escalation. We discuss what bullying is, as well as incidents we would not describe as bullying, with all pupils through assemblies and PSHE lessons.

<b>Bullying can be:</b>	
<b>Emotional</b>	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
<b>Physical</b>	Pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence
<b>Racial</b>	Hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that make the person feel unwelcome, marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity culture, faith, community, national origin or national status
<b>Ableist</b>	Bullying behaviour 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.
<b>Sexual</b>	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
<b>Sexist</b>	Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
<b>Socioeconomic</b>	Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.
<b>Prejudicial</b>	Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences eg religion or mental health issues.
<b>Homophobic</b>	Occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.
<b>Direct or Indirect</b>	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
<b>Cyber Bullying</b>	Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health conditions
- Home circumstances, including young carers and poverty
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying, homophobia

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

### **Vulnerable Groups**

At Maulden Lower School we recognise that some groups of pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Looked After Children
- Pupils who are adopted
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Pupils suffering from a health problem
- Children from ethnic minorities
- Children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds
- Children for whom English is an Additional Language
- Children who are or are perceived to be LGBTQ+

### **Child on Child Abuse**

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.

All staff will:

- Be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.
- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.

- Never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.
- Be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.
- Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual harassment in particular can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks, or calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual “jokes” or taunting.
- Deliberately brushing against someone.
- Displaying images or video of a sexual nature.
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence).
- Online sexual harassment, e.g. creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children’s social care services (CSCS) and potentially the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

All staff will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that pupils may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Pupils being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened.

The school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy outlines the school’s stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed..

### **Bullying is not**

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP).

Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children’s development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

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

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to underperform in school work
- has possessions 'go missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- is frightened to say what's wrong.

*NB this is not a definitive list but suggests some of the signs and symptoms.*

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.

### **What can you do if you are being bullied?**

We want everybody to feel confident to report bullying whenever and wherever it happens and get the help they need to feel safe again. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people that can help you. Tell someone you trust, giving them as many facts as you can (who, where, what, why, when, how). All pupils know that if they are experiencing bullying they should tell their teacher in the first instance. Should a pupil not feel confident in doing this they may choose to speak to any adult in the school that they feel they trust or they may speak to a school council representative.

### **What can you do if you see someone else being bullied? (The role of the bystander)**

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means that the bully has won and gives them more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger, for example tell a member of staff as soon as possible or ask someone you trust about what to do.

### **Strategies in school for the prevention and reduction of bullying**

Whole school initiatives are proactive teaching strategies are used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- each class agreeing on their own set of class rules
- making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year
- raising awareness through assemblies, work in PSHCE lessons, discussions as part of the relationships and health education curriculum and circle time discussions
- using drama and role play activities to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- introduction of playground improvements and initiatives
- use of playground buddies during lunchtime
- using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour

- involving parents and the wider community
- multi agency work – working with social services, Jigsaw etc

In addition, staff need to feel safe in order to help make the children feel safe. Staff are aware of procedures to follow in such an instance or they can contact their union for advice and support.

### **Procedures for reporting and dealing with bullying incidents**

Maulden Lower School staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying. They will be taken seriously and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all those involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

Where bullying is of a racist nature, we will report this to the Local Authority using the Racial Incident Report Form.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by the class teacher or member of the SLT.

Work with children who have been bullied could involve some or all of the following:

- we will provide support to pupils who are bullied
- they will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and this is not their fault
- we will assure them that it was right to report the incident
- we will encourage them to talk about how they feel
- we will try to ascertain the extent of the problem
- we will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved
- we will try to ensure that they feel safe
- we will discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe
- we will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us
- we will affirm that bullying can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does
- we will involve their friends/older pupils in peer support/buddy system/mediation

We will then adopt strategies from the following list as appropriate:

- we will speak with the pupil/pupils involved in the bullying separately
- we will listen to their version of events
- we will talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying
- we will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop
- we will seek a commitment to this end
- we will affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied
- we will adopt a joint problem solving approach where this is appropriate, and ask the pupils involved to help us find solutions to the problem. This will encourage pupils involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others.

- we will consider sanctions under our school's Behaviour Policy
- we will advise pupils responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure the bullying stops
- we will ensure that those involved know that we have done so
- when bullying occurs, we will contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage
- we will keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them
- we will follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again
- we will also work with pupils who have been involved in bullying others to ascertain the sort of support that they themselves need.

There is a tendency, often quite a natural one, to want to investigate an incident and 'get to the bottom of it'. Sometimes this will be entirely appropriate. There will be other occasions where an extended investigation is actually unhelpful and where a problem-solving approach will be the most effective response.

*Our policy will be to use our discretion to respond flexibly and in an appropriate way to each incident.*

### **When Tougher Measures are Needed**

If necessary, we will invoke the following range of sanctions that are in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. These include:

- Removal from the group (within the class)
- withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- withholding participation in school events that are not an essential part of the curriculum
- in extreme cases we will also consider fixed term and/or permanent exclusion from school.

### **Our Responsibilities**

Everyone within school is expected to:

- act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another
- adhere to and to promote the objectives of this policy

Pupils are expected to:

- report all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report
- support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and happy and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school

Parents/Carers can help by:

- supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community

- discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or if they are unhappy in some way
- helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

DO NOT:

- Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child or by speaking to their parents
- encourage your child to be a bully back

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

### **Bullying Outside the School Premises**

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

The head teacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, e.g. 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 will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

The head teacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

### **Concerns, Complaints ..... and Compliments**

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Head Teacher's notice. If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure a copy of which may be viewed on the school website or a paper copy obtained from the school office.

We would also be pleased to receive compliments/feedback from parents when things have gone well.

*This policy statement has been endorsed by the Governing Body, and will be reviewed on a two year basis*

Policy reviewed and updated : Signed .....Date .....

Policy ratified and updated : Signed ..... Date .....

Appendix 1.

### **Help and Organisations**

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

Kidscape is a charity working UK wide to keep children safe from bullying and sexual abuse

[www.beatbullying.co.uk](http://www.beatbullying.co.uk)

Bullying prevention charity providing anti-bullying resources, information, advice and support

[www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

Safer internet centre

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

Brings together a number of organisations with the aim of reducing bullying and creating a safer environment in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

[www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

ACE provides advice and information to parents and carers on a wide range of education and school based issues including exclusion, school admissions and admission appeals, special education needs, bullying and school attendance.