

Pontesbury CE Primary School



Anti-bullying Policy

Reviewed: October 2024
Next review date: October 2026

At the forefront of this policy is the Church of England's vision for education 'Educating for life in all its fullness' and the school's vision 'Aim High, Climb Higher' (which is reflected by Psalm 121 "Lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD"). The following procedure and practice outlines how all our school community can prevent bullying to promote the flourishing of children and adults in our school community (whilst ensuring that legislation and guidance are followed).

Aims

Everyone at Pontesbury CE Primary School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. At Pontesbury CE Primary School we work hard to create a culture and ethos of mutually respectful behaviour. However, if bullying is seen, heard or reported ALL staff are confident in their actions and subsequent support.

It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists, the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

Our Behaviour Policy (underpinned by our vision and values) encourages and rewards positive behaviour and respect between pupils and staff. Our behaviour approach is communicated regularly to all our children and ensures that staff have a common language to deal with any incidents that arise.

This document outlines how we make this possible at Pontesbury CE Primary School.

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves. This can take the form of name-calling, violence, threatened violence, isolation, ridicule or indirect action such as spreading unpleasant stories about someone. This also includes cyber bullying which is the school has a specific policy for.

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out".

To be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include the following:

- an imbalance of power such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity to control or harm others. These imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- repetition as these behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason, e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Online bullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, e- mail, chat rooms, etc.) to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. It can take many forms and this list is not exhaustive:

- Abusive or threatening texts, emails, or messages
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites
- Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else
- Stealing someone's online identity
- Spreading rumours online
- Trolling-sending menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chat rooms or games
- Developing hate sites about another person
- Prank calls or messages
- Group bullying or exclusion online
- Anonymous messaging
- Encouraging a young person to self-harm
- Pressuring children to send sexual messages or engaging in sexual conversations.

At Pontesbury CE Primary School, we adopt our definition of bullying from the Anti-Bullying Association. Bullying is:

'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.'

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

- physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal - name-calling, insulting, racist remarks, use of technology;
- indirect - spreading unkind stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups;

Our aims and objectives in formulating this statement are:-

- To reduce and eradicate wherever possible instances in which pupils are subjected to bullying.
- To establish appropriate means of providing after-care should an incident of bullying occur.

- To ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of this Policy and fulfil their obligations to it.

Actions to Tackle Bullying

Our school vision is at the heart of everything we do. Central to that vision are our values of compassion, respect and happiness.

We use a pupil-friendly anti-bullying definition to ensure that all pupils understand what bullying is and how to report it. (Please see the start of this policy.) In our opinion, prevention is better than cure so at Pontesbury CE Primary School we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour.

As well as being vigilant for signs of bullying, our pro-active approach to combat bullying includes:

- pastoral support from leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and ELSA;
- structured 'in house' programmes of support for an individual or small group;
- sessions with an external counsellor;
- support from external agencies, often brokered through the 'Early Help' process;
- Assemblies (collective worship) are used to make clear the school's expectations about behaviour and to reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable at our school. They also explore the importance of inclusivity, dignity and respect as well as other themes that play a part in challenging bullying.
- Each year group undertakes teaching units relating to Anti-Bullying as part of PSHE lessons. The PSHE programme of study includes opportunities for pupils to understand about different types of bullying and what they can do to prevent and respond to bullying. It also includes opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves, value others and appreciate and respect/celebrating difference.
- Class based discussions and activities, including circle time, provide regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for teachers to make specific interventions.
- Through a variety of planned activities across the curriculum pupils are given the opportunity to gain self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions.
- Our E-Safety work considers the issue of cyber-bullying.
- The school council meets regularly and is able to discuss any area of school life.
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and pupils across the school.

Should bullying occur, pupils are told that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their

knowledge to a member of staff. There is provision for school members to report incidents anonymously through the worry box.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of incidents. The Class teacher of the victim will be responsible for this and will be required to give a copy of report and the action taken to the Headteacher. All proven incidents of bullying are recorded via CPOMs. All incidences of bullying must be reported to the Headteacher who along with the class teacher will conduct a thorough investigation. If bullying includes racist abuse, discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, sexist, disability and homophobic/ biphobic/transphobic bullying and use of derogatory language then it should be reported to the Headteacher to be recorded as such on CPOMs and to the Local Authority.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

There are various strategies that can be applied if more than one pupil is involved in bullying another. Role-play and other drama techniques can be used as well as Circle Time. If held regularly, this can be an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour. It can also be used just within the affected group to confront bullying that already exists.

Victims who are worried about openly discussing an incident when the aggressors are present (eg taunting during a lesson) can be encouraged to go to the teacher with a piece of work, using this as a reason to speak to the teacher. Victims need to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour, and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying.

Aftercare

Whenever a child has been bullied then the class teacher/TA and the Headteacher will continue to check in with the victim regularly to ensure that there have been no further repercussions. This will be done through informal check-ins.

Parental Involvement

The parents of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. (Persistent bullies may be excluded from school). A monitoring tool may also be used for achieving desired behaviours.

Keeping information from the school, or from their parents, will never help a problem to be solved, and will prolong the period a victim has to suffer. Whilst there is little history of bullying at Pontesbury, we believe that one case is one case too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary we have and will call on outside resources such as the Behaviour Support Service, to support our action. This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour Policy and our Child-on-Child abuse risk assessment.

Equalities Statement

Through appropriate treatment of all, Pontesbury CE Primary School aims to eliminate unlawful discrimination, prejudice, harassment and stereotyping and strive to maintain policies that comply with current legislation. This applies to all members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and community members and is based on the School's core values. During the review of this policy the nine protected characteristics of the Public Sector Equality Duty, i.e. race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and gender reassignment have been considered.