

# BOLD FUTURES



## Bold Futures Federation Anti-Bullying Policy

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Policy Owner)

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Governor Approval)

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## POLICY CHANGE HISTORY

\*This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour policy, Equality policies, Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Online Safety Policy

### **Aims:**

- to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment which allows all our pupils to learn in an atmosphere which is focussed on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential
- We expect our pupils to act safely, and feel safe, in and outside of school - we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we are committed to preventing and tackling it
- We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our pupils to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours
- If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our schools

At the Federation, we encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

### **What it is, and who's more vulnerable**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

It can:

- Happen online such as through social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites, devices or via images, audio, video, or written content generated by artificial intelligence (AI)
- Happen in or out of school
- Be sexual in nature, such as explicit sexual remarks or inappropriate touching
- Be emotional, physical or verbal
- Be prejudice-based or discriminatory
- Bullying can have significant effects on children's mental health, including into adulthood. Children who are bullied might also do less well at school and have fewer friends.

Some children may be more vulnerable to bullying due to perceived differences, such as:

- Having special educational needs or disabilities (ableism)
- Characteristics such as race, religion or sexual orientation
- Being adopted or in care
- Suffering from a health problem
- Having caring responsibilities

**What to look out for:**

- Truanting or seeming reluctant to attend school
- Being nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- Nervous or secretive behaviour
- Physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- Belongings getting lost or damaged
- Not doing well at school

**What to do**

- If you have concerns that a child is being bullied, always follow our policies and procedures
- If you think a pupil is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, treat a bullying incident as a child protection concern. Discuss your concerns with our designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)

**If a pupil tells you about prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying:**

- Listen to them and take them seriously
- Show empathy
- Let them know it's not their fault and they were right to tell you
- Avoid stereotypes

At the Federation, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults.

These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out.

Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our schools are aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually),

pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'. Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our schools will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our schools will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our schools will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported.

### **What does bullying behaviour look like?**

At the Federation, we consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviours of concern occur. We will consider the motivations behind the behaviours and will take into account the age and stage of development of the pupils involved. Our focus will always be the safety and welfare of all children involved.

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical - pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling
- Emotional - isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online / Cyber - posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion etc.
- Indirect - can include the exploitation of individuals such as 'false friendships', criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation
- Prejudice-related - derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, because they have a learning or physical disability.

Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

### **Where does bullying take place?**

We understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community. Bullying may also take place online (this is sometimes referred to as cyberbullying). We will offer support and guidance to pupils, parents/carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying whether this has taken place inside school, outside of school or online. We are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

### **How to report bullying concerns:**

At the Federation, we want pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved.

#### **Pupils, including bystanders/witnesses**

We ask that all pupils report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour to a member of school staff - this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, including a class LSA, the FSW, the Head teacher, a member of the play team or a member of the office team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in assemblies to remind our pupils of who they can report concerns to. The member of staff will listen to the pupil and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on the schools' recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the relevant school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We understand that some pupils may find it difficult to tell a member of staff about their concerns verbally, we therefore have additional reporting mechanisms in place.

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

#### **Parents/Carers:**

We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying. We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact a member of school staff.

Initially, we ask parents/carers to contact their child's class teacher to explain their concerns. The class teacher will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for more time to discuss the concerns in detail. Following the report and/or the meeting, the teacher will make a formal record of the bullying report on the schools' recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk. Other members of staff may become involved as outlined below. The Headteacher or SLT may become involved at any point in the process if deemed appropriate.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the appropriate school with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in

person or online. Our schools remain committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly.

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations). This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

### **School staff:**

If staff have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or are concerned that a pupil is displaying behaviours that may show they are the target of bullying or perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told. We ask that staff report their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead/directly to SLT as appropriate and this should be recorded on CPOMs where other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff must directly alert the school's relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

### **Visitors:**

We ensure that all visitors to our schools are aware of our Safeguarding procedures and which staff member they should report any concerns to. The member of staff may differ depending on the purpose of the visit (e.g. supply teacher, governor, external agency etc). We ask that if a visitor to our schools has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed, or been told about, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead/a member of the Senior Leadership Team. We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by the end of the school day. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the schools' recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

### **How our staff will respond to reports of bullying:**

Across our Federation, all reports of bullying or reported concerns of bullying behaviours will be taken seriously and investigated. Even if an incident is deemed 'not bullying' or a 'relational conflict', our school remains committed to supporting all pupils who have been involved and effected. Our schools keep records of all reports of bullying, this information is stored on our schools' recording system (CPOMs). These records are used to identify trends and inform our schools' preventative work. Information from these records is discussed regularly at staff meetings to ensure that all staff are kept up-to-date and are alert to any ongoing concerns.

Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Some of our schools' responses may include, but may not be limited to:

- Talk to all pupils involved in the reported incident
- Talk to the parents
- Implement appropriate consequences in accordance with our school's behaviour policy. These consequences will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident, but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable
- Discuss the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations when appropriate
- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g., the Police, District Council etc.)
- Keep in touch with the person who reported the incident/behaviour to inform them that action has been taken - this may include a pupil, a parent/carer/guardian, a member of staff or visitor, or another member of the school community. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.
- Implement a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work)
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate. Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website and on request from the school office.

### **Strategies for preventing bullying:**

Our Federation is committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community.

The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- Through the schools' ethos of Make Every Minute Matter/ Every Learning Minute Counts. Across the Federation, our values are Aspiration, Integrity & Resilience, and Aspiration, Resilience, Community
- Ensuring that the schools actively promote the celebration of difference and diversity
- Robust PSHE curriculum for all year groups
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually

- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying
- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions - through surveys etc.
- Specific initiatives for identified individuals or groups
- Monitoring and evaluation of our SEND children and vulnerable children.
- Reflective pastoral support (Bubble Time, ELSA, TALA and others)
- Regular staff training and development for all staff (including lunchtime play team)
- Visits from external agencies (e.g. NSPCC, TETC Team, NCC Anti-Racism Education Programme etc)
- All staff model expected behaviour
- RE Curriculum
- Approach the British Values
- Our Curriculum which includes: tackling prejudice and celebrating differences