



**Gamston St Peter's
CofE Primary School**

Anti-Bullying Policy

Last Updated December 2024

Introduction

At Gamston St Peter's C of E Primary School, we aim to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment that allows all our pupils to learn in an atmosphere focused on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential. We expect our pupils to act safely and feel safe, both in and outside of school. We do not tolerate any form of bullying and 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 dedicated to supporting our pupils to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and prevent them from escalating into bullying behaviours.

If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers, and staff should feel confident in reporting it. All incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school.

At Gamston St Peter's CofE Primary School, we encourage open discussions around differences between people, actively challenge prejudice, and 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.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance (1st September 2024) and was formulated in consultation with the whole school community, with input from:

- Members of staff (through staff meetings)
- Parents/carers (through parents' evening meetings and parent surveys)
- Pupils (through the school council, feedback in class, surveys)
- Governors (through governor meetings)
- Other partners (discussions with breakfast clubs and after-school clubs)

This policy is available:

- Online on our school website
- From the school office
- Child-friendly versions are on display and in welcome packs for new pupils

This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year and updated annually.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff at our school are aware that children may bully other children, both inside and outside of school and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

- **Headteacher:** Mr Chris Edwards has overall responsibility for Anti-Bullying at our school. He is responsible for appointing an Anti-Bullying Coordinator and liaising with the Governing Body, parents/carers, the Local Authority, and outside agencies when appropriate.
- **Anti-Bullying Coordinator:** Mr Chris Edwards, supported by Mrs Linda Hardy, is responsible for:
 - Policy development and review (ensuring that pupils, staff, governors, and parents/carers have opportunities to contribute)
 - Implementing the policy and monitoring/assessing its effectiveness

- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Coordinating Anti-Bullying training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Monitoring the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying behaviour
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** The DSL and their Deputy in our school are Mr Chris Edwards (Headteacher) and Mrs Linda Hardy (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant). Safeguarding is the responsibility of all; however, all staff, parents/carers, and pupils need to be aware of who to report to and how to report any safeguarding concerns.
- **Nominated Governor:** The Governor with responsibility for Anti-Bullying and Behaviour is **Mr Gary Hunt**.

What is Bullying and How Does it Differ from Relational Conflict?

At Gamston St Peter's CofE Primary School, we have adopted the definition of bullying provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance:

“Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.”

We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (for example, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care, or has caring responsibilities). Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils that 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 school is 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 school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

Examples of Relational Conflict:

- Disagreements over games or activities
- Misunderstandings that lead to hurt feelings
- Temporary disputes that can be resolved with guidance

Distinction from Bullying:

- Relational conflicts are typically one-off incidents or temporary disagreements, while bullying is characterised by repeated, intentional harm and an imbalance of power.

What Does Bullying Behaviour Look Like?

At Gamston St Peter's CofE Primary School, 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?

At Gamston St Peter's CofE Primary School, 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 Gamston St Peter's CofE Primary School, 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, including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour, and the wider school community. We have clear reporting systems for each group of our school community. The effectiveness of these reporting systems is reviewed throughout the academic year and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community.

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 teacher, a teaching assistant, the Headteacher, a lunchtime supervisor, or a member of the office team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in collective worship 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 school's recording system (CPOMs), and other relevant members of staff 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.

We understand that some pupils may find it difficult to tell a member of staff about their concerns verbally; therefore, we have additional reporting mechanisms in place. Our school has a worry box in The Heart/Library where the pupil can put their name/a brief note about their concerns/draw a picture of their concern – this worry box is introduced to the pupils at the start of the year and pupils are reminded of it regularly.

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, they contact a member of school staff. Initially, we ask parents/carers to contact their child's class teacher (in person/via telephone call/via email/via Class Dojo) 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 school's recording system (CPOMs), and other relevant members of staff 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.

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

Our school remains 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. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

School Staff

Our staff work closely with our pupils and therefore may notice a change in a pupil's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a pupil or a member of the school community. 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 perhaps 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 the Headteacher, or to the Anti-Bullying Coordinator. 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 school's recording system (CPOMs), and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff must directly alert the school's 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 school are aware of our Child Protection and 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 school has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed or been told about, they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher. We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by the end of the school day. For example, it would not be appropriate to wait until the following day or leave a written note with concerns. 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 school's 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 School Will Respond to Reports of Bullying

At Gamston St Peter's CofE Primary School, 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 affected.

Our school keeps records of all reports of bullying; this information is stored on our school's recording system (CPOMs). These records are used to identify trends and inform our school's 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 school's responses may include, but may not be limited to:

- Talking to all pupils involved in the reported incident – this may include the target, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses.
- Talking to the parents (of the target and/or the alleged perpetrator).
- Implementing appropriate sanctions in accordance with our school's behaviour policy. These sanctions will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable.
- Discussing the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and making referrals to those organisations when appropriate.
- Liaising with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g., the Police, District Council, etc.).
- Keeping 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.
- Implementing a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work with the target and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the target, individual or group work with the alleged perpetrator, individual or group work with any witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider school community, etc.).
- Monitoring the effectiveness of actions taken and reassessing/taking more actions if appropriate.
- Liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns – a DSL may then refer to the Nottinghamshire MASH.
- Referring to the Nottinghamshire County Council 'Pathways to Provision' document and completing an EHAF if appropriate.

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

At Gamston St Peter's CofE Primary School, we are 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:

- Active school council with representatives from each year group.
- Playground friends – peer-mentoring schemes.
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually (November).
- Taking part in Safer Internet Day annually (February).
- Robust R(S)HE curriculum for all year groups.
- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying.
- Drop-down days/themed days to promote equality and tackle prejudice.
- End of term/end of academic year celebration events.
- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions – through surveys, etc.
- Inclusive displays throughout the school with a diverse range of work, photographs, etc.
- Inclusive toys and books throughout the school raising awareness of and celebrating differences.
- Positive Play/ELSA support/Lego therapy/counselling for identified students.
- Specific initiatives for identified individuals or groups.
- Parent information board and area on the school website.
- Parent events.
- Regular staff training and development for all staff (including lunchtime supervisors and staff who support our before and after-school clubs).
- All staff model expected behaviour.

Breaches / Complaints

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

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.

Links with Other Policies

You may find it helpful to read this Anti-Bullying policy alongside the following school policies:

- Child-on-child Abuse Policy (Previously named 'Peer-on-peer')
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety / E-Safety / Acceptable Use Policies
- Equalities Policy
- RSHE / PSHE Policy
- Complaints Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year. It is updated annually.

- **Date approved by the Governing Body:** 03.12.24
- **Date to be reviewed:** Autumn 2025