

Anti-Bullying Policy



Policy Folder: Pastoral

Last Review: September 2025

Next Review: September 2027

Led by: Peter Fowlie (HT)

Anti-bullying coordinator: Nuala Thompson

Anti-bullying governor: Nicholas McGowan

Responsible Committee: Curriculum & Pupils



Introduction

At Lantern Lane Primary & Nursery School we aim 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 school.

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.

Whilst this policy primarily addresses bullying involving pupils, we recognise that harmful behaviour can also occur within relationships involving adults and children. Any concerns that a member of staff, volunteer, contractor or other adult may have bullied, intimidated, humiliated, victimised or otherwise caused harm to a pupil will be treated seriously and responded to in line with the school's safeguarding, staff conduct, allegations against staff, and complaints procedures. All pupils have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

Policy Development

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community with input from:

- Members of staff - through regular agenda items at staff briefings and training sessions, the consultation documents and surveys.
- Governors - through reports to governors, discussions at governors' meetings and regular meetings with nominated governor.
- Parents/carers - by taking part in written consultations, parent meetings, consultation producing a shorter parent's guide.
- Children and young people – through circle time discussions and pupil voice etc., the school council will develop a pupil friendly version to be displayed in classrooms.
- Other partners - Anti-bullying and Online Safety Coordinator.

This policy is available

- From our school website
- Paper copies are available from our school office upon request
- Parent & child friendly versions are on display & in welcome packs for new starters

Roles and responsibilities

The Head teacher (Mr. Fowlie)

Has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies and appointing an Anti-bullying coordinator (Behaviour Lead) who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

Anti-bullying Coordinator (Mrs. Thompson)

Responsibilities are:

- 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

Nominated governor with the responsibility for Behaviour & Anti-bullying: Nicholas McGowan.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Leads (DSL) is Peter Fowlie and their Deputies in our school are Jen Evans, Nuala Thompson & Paula Panther. 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.

All staff are expected to model respectful, professional and inclusive behaviour at all times. Staff must not engage in behaviour that could be experienced by a child as intimidating, humiliating, degrading, bullying or discriminatory. Any concerns regarding adult conduct towards pupils must be reported in line with safeguarding procedures.#

What is bullying and how does it differ to relational conflict?

At our 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. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. 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 & ethnicity, religion & belief, gender identity, sex, 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, 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 school is aware that 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 an episode of 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).

What does bullying behaviour look like?

At Lantern Lane, 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 and gossiping.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online / Cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion, posting / sharing socially embarrassing material 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, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist (ableist) in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their sex, religion or beliefs, race/ethnicity/nationality; or because they have a learning or physical disability; or because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling or friend who is. It may include misogyny or misandry and be sexist in nature. 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. Our school also understands that some behaviour such as 'baiting' or 'false friendships' may constitute as bullying, we will consider the context of all incidents and aim to support all children involved.

Our school understands that banter is an increasingly relevant part of discussions relating to bullying; however, it is important to acknowledge that banter is not inherently bullying, and it can be an important part of social bonding and friendships. At the same time, we know that some bullying in society is passed off as 'just banter', and we know that banter can quickly escalate to inappropriate or harmful exchanges and bullying.

Our school defines 'prosocial banter' as 'playful, typically funny, reciprocal, teasing between friends' that is well intended. Prosocial banter can occur both online and offline and includes a range of behaviours that may be verbal, physical, or information/message sharing (online). When engaging in prosocial banter, all parties present exchange banter and all share the positive experience. Banter can include some of the bullying behaviours set out in this policy document, so it is important to distinguish between shared positive social bonding and inappropriate banter and bullying. School staff will distinguish between banter and bullying by taking careful consideration of the intention, content and topic of reported incidents.

Where does bullying take place?

At Lantern Lane, 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.

We anticipate the full support of parents/carers and families during our investigations of reports of bullying or relational conflicts and request that they work in partnership with our school colleagues to help provide all evidence and context to any reported incidents (particularly when alleged incidents have taken place online). We ask that parents/carers remain vigilant about their children's online activities and behaviour online, and work in partnership with the school to educate children about the importance of online safety.

Prejudice Related Bullying

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy, Roma, Travellers
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex/gender
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and monitor, analyse & review, and report their prevalence to our governing body, and take further action if necessary.

Other vulnerable groups include:

- bullying related to appearance, health or SEND
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Prejudice Related Language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transsexual, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is, because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Cyberbullying

The increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims. Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school. Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other forms of bullying.

Cyberbullying can include:

- hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice /hate messages
- Impersonating someone online
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. We recognise that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Lantern Lane Primary & Nursery School will treat any cyber bullying (including the use of AI) in line with our policies and procedures laid out in this policy, alongside our online safety policy and relationships and behaviour policy.

We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our online safety policy) and encourage good online behaviour.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people
- young people and staff
- between staff
- individuals or groups

Child on Child Abuse

We are committed to a whole school approach to ensure the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within our school and beyond.

Our school recognises that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers. We take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. This includes verbal as well as physical abuse. Peer on peer abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as part of “banter” or “growing up”.

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexting or youth produced digital imagery
- Bullying
- Radicalisation
- Abuse in intimate relationships
- Children who display sexually harmful behaviour
- Gang association and serious violence (County Lines)
- Technology can be used by for bullying and other abusive behaviour

In cases where peer on peer abuse is identified we will follow the procedures laid out in our peer on peer abuse policy, taking a contextual approach to support all children and young people who have been affected by the situation.

Some of these behaviours will be handled with reference to other policies in school such as the behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, child protection policy and online safety policy, although if any doubt over the correct response, staff, volunteers and visitors should not hesitate to report concerns following normal safeguarding procedures.

Our child-on-child abuse policy includes the following information:

- Procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse.
- How allegations are recorded and dealt with.
- Clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected will be supported

Our Child-on-Child Abuse Policy covers all aspects of child-on-child abuse but concentrates on child-on-child abuse in the context of sexual harassment and sexual violence. It is compliant with the new statutory guidance on child-on-child abuse as set out in KCSiE (September 2026) and should be read in conjunction with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB) Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and any relevant Practice Guidance. The school has also written this policy taking into account the ‘Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges’ guidance 2018.

Reporting, Recording and Responding to Bullying

At Lantern Lane, 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 TA, the Head teacher, a lunchtime supervisor, 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 school's recording system 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, we therefore have additional reporting mechanisms in place. Our school has a worry box in each classroom where the pupil can put their name/a brief note about their concerns/draw a picture of their concern – these worry boxes are introduced to the pupils at the start of the year, and pupils are reminded of them 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.

We recognise that some pupils, including some children with SEND, may require additional support to recognise, understand or report bullying concerns. We will make reasonable adjustments to our reporting systems to ensure they are accessible and inclusive. Pupils may choose to report concerns verbally, through visual communication methods, through a trusted adult, through written or electronic means, or with support from a member of staff who knows them well.

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 (either over the phone, in person or on ClassDojo) 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 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. We ask that parents/carers remain vigilant about their child's online and out-of-school activities and that they work in partnership with the school to provide any evidence to allow staff to investigate the matter fully and in a timely manner.

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 (General Data Protection Regulations). 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 senior leader. 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 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, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. 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 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.

Procedures for Responding to Bullying

At Lantern Lane, 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. The member of staff who received the initial concern will their information on the 'Incident Log', an electronic template, and, where appropriate, CPOMS as well as informing a member of the school's leadership team. 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:

- Talk to all pupils involved in the reported incident – this may include the target, child who has allegedly displayed bullying behaviour, and any bystanders/witnesses

- Talk to the parents/carers (of the target and/or the child who has allegedly displayed bullying behaviour). We anticipate the full support from parents/carers and request that they provide staff with all available evidence (particularly when alleged incidents have taken place online).
- Our school will take a restorative and education-based approach in order to address the possible root causes for any bullying behaviours. When appropriate, we will implement 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. We may issue bespoke interventions or next steps of support depending on the circumstances and root causes.
- 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 with the target and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the target, individual or group work with the child who has displayed bullying behaviour, individual or group work with any witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider-school community etc.)
- 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 and consider the potential impact of the experiences – a DSL may then liaise with other professionals and Local Authority teams as appropriate (e.g., school counsellor, CAMHS, MASH etc.)

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.

Monitoring Incidents of Bullying

Incidents of bullying will be stored and monitor by the Anti-bullying Coordinator. Information stored in school will be used to ensure individual incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy. This information will be discussed by staff in regular staff meetings every half term. This information will be presented to governors on a termly basis.

Strategies for Preventing Bullying

At Lantern Lane, 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.

- Ensuring that the school actively promotes the celebration of difference and diversity as part of our core values
- Anti-Bullying week annually in November and Safer Internet Day in February
- PSHE/Citizenship curriculum lessons and cross curriculum themes
- Celebration events

- Diversity and protected characteristics included and celebrated across the curriculum
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as cyber bullying and internet safety
- Concerned about Bullying box in school and school council
- Peer mentoring schemes and other student lead initiatives
- Proactive & reactive programmes for victims, pupils involved in bullying. For example – ELSA support, interventions & small group work
- Ensure reporting systems, anti-bullying education and pupil voice activities are accessible for children with SEND through the use of adapted resources, visual supports and personalised approaches where require
- Support for parents/carers
- Parent information events/ information-on the school website
- Support for all school staff
- Staff training and development for all staff including those involved in lunchtime and before and after school activities
- Encouraging all staff to model expected behaviour
- Regular staff training and development for all staff (including lunchtime supervisors and staff who support our before and after-school clubs)

Concerns relating to adults

It is important to distinguish between child-on-child bullying and concerns relating to the conduct of adults. Allegations, complaints or concerns about staff behaviour towards pupils would not normally be defined or recorded as bullying incidents within the school's Anti-Bullying procedures. Instead, they should be considered in line with the school's safeguarding responsibilities, staff code of conduct, complaints procedures, disciplinary processes and allegations management procedures where appropriate.

- All adults are expected to treat pupils with dignity, respect and professionalism.
- Pupils can report concerns about the behaviour of any adult.
- Concerns will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately.
- Reports relating to adults will be managed through relevant safeguarding, complaints, conduct or disciplinary procedures.
- Appropriate support will be offered to any pupil affected by the behaviour of an adult.

Links with other policies & guidance

- Relationships & Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
- Equalities policy
- Complaints Procedure
- KCSiE 2026 - National safeguarding legislation and guidance

Monitoring & review

The policy will be reviewed and updated annually and, in the interim, should there be updated guidance and/or legislation.