Didcot
PRIMARY ACADEMY

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is available to parents/carers and prospective parents/carers on the school's website and by request from the School Office. If you require a copy of this document in large print or audio format, please contact the School Office.

Policy Review Schedule

Policy Name	DPA Anti-Bullying Policy	
Review Frequency	Annual	
Statutory Policy	Yes	
Policy Owner	Executive Principal	
Lead Reviewer	Behaviour Lead	
Approver and date of last approval	Executive Principal: August 2026	
Key review dates	**Changes made**	
April 2016	By: A Ashcroft	
Review: October 17	By: A Ashcroft	
Reviewed October 18	By A Ashcroft	• Updated definition of bullying from DFE and link • Added use of Discriminatory language • References to CPOMS added
Reviewed November 19	By A Ashcroft	• No changes
Reviewed October 21	By A Ashcroft	• Removed references to Integris. All record keeping is on CPOMS.
Reviewed October 2022	By A Ashcroft	• No changes
Reviewed January 2023	By A Ashcroft	• Added section on child on child abuse and dealing with cyberbullying.
Reviewed May 2024	By A Ashcroft	• Added section on Artificial Intelligence
Reviewed May 2025	By C Lamming	• Updated references to recent statutory guidance. • Updated reference on child-on-child sexual harassment and violence. • Updated guidance on online safety, filtering and monitoring.
Reviewed August 2026	A Ashcroft	• Added information on cyber bullying and the responsibility of parents/carers

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Policy statement

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children, parents/carers and staff so they can engage with one another in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe in encouraging relationships that are based on mutual respect, trust, caring and consideration for others. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school. We will respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. In the event that bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell an adult and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Children who are bullying will learn different ways of behaving. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to speak out.

This policy has reference to DfE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2017, last updated 2023), the Equality Act 2010, and the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) 2024. Safe to Learn: safetolearn_overview.pdf (endbullying.org.uk). It also considers the DFE statutory guidance "keeping children safe in Education 2024. The school will review and update its approach in line with future guidance.

This policy should be read alongside our Behaviour, E-Safety, Equality and Safeguarding Children policies.

Aims

At Didcot Primary Academy we aim to:

- to provide a caring, safe environment for everyone in our community;
- to ensure all staff understand that bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated;
- to ensure all staff are familiar with this policy, understand what bullying is and what processes to follow when bullying is reported;
- to ensure all pupils and parents/carers know what our policy on bullying is and what they should do if bullying arises;
- to prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour;
- to react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way;
- to safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil;
- to provide help for pupils who have bullied.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the:

- The Principal to communicate this policy to the school community and to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- All staff, including the Trust, senior leadership, teaching and non teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by this policy

What Is Bullying?

- The Department for Education defines bullying as: 'behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.' https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture;
- bullying related to having learning difficulties or disabilities;
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions;
- bullying related to sexual orientation;
- bullying of young carers or vulnerable children or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- sexist or sexual bullying;
- cyber bullying.

Bullying is not an appropriate term to describe losing your temper, not getting your own way,

retaliating, having cross words, making people be friends with you, not agreeing or falling out with your friends.

Bullying can take place:

- between pupils;
- between pupils and staff;
- between staff;
- between staff and parents/carers;
- between parents/carers;
- by individuals or groups;
- face to face or indirectly;
- using a range of cyber bullying methods.

What is racist and religious bullying?

In racist and religious bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as being a member of a different ethnic, cultural or religious group. People do not have to be of that group to suffer racist and religious bullying. This bullying not only impacts on the individual person, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same or similar group. Inappropriate assumptions may be made about someone's religion or belief because of their ethnic origin.
Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry;
- pretending not to understand/using gibberish;
- physical threats or attacks;
- mockery of physical appearance;
- mockery of country of origin;
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia;
- having racist leaflets, comics or magazines;
- defacing of property;
- graffiti;
- inciting others to behave in a racist way;
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking;
- mockery of person's contributions to work;
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone);
- mockery of dress, religious observance, dietary habits.

What is bullying related to learning difficulties or disabilities?

People with Special Educational Needs or disabled people may be less able or more reluctant to articulate experiences as well as others. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability.
Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry;
- physical threats or attacks;
- defacing of property;
- graffiti;

- inciting others to behave negatively towards those with disabilities;
- mockery of a specific difficulty or disability;
- mockery of a person's contributions to work;
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone).

What is homophobic or biphobic bullying?

In homophobic bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (trans) person. People do not have to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans to suffer homophobic bullying. This bullying not only impacts on the individual person, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same group. It may be based on gender stereotyping. Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry;
- physical threats or attacks;
- mockery of subject and career choice;
- defacing of property graffiti;
- inciting others to behave in a homophobic way;
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking;
- mockery of person's contributions to work;
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone);
- graffiti.

What is sexist bullying?

In sexist bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as being a member of a particular gender. This bullying impacts on the individual person and on all men and women. Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry;
- physical threats or attacks (hitting, kicking, theft);
- inciting others to behave in sexist way;
- inappropriate and uninvited touching;
- sexual assault;
- display of pornographic material;
- mockery of physical appearance;
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia;
- having sexist leaflets, comics or magazines;
- sexual innuendo;
- defacing of property;
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking;
- mockery of person's contributions to work;
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone);
- rumour spreading - excluding someone from a group;
- mockery of clothing;
- mockery of subject and career choice.

Bullying is recognised by DPA as being a form of child-on-child abuse; children can abuse other

children. The policy covers all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, in line with KCSIE 2024. All incidents are taken seriously and responded to in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

- Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter’, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”
- We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may the case that it is just not being reported.
- All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless where the abuse takes place.

Whilst all the above constitute some manifestations of bullying, it should be remembered that an incident of bullying is anything that the victim or anyone else perceives to be such an incident.

Discriminatory language

Discriminatory language and abusive language are not acceptable and will be challenged. Such language is never to be viewed as ‘banter’ or a ‘normal part of growing up’. This reflects the expectations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024.

Signs and Symptoms

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

- is frightened of or unwilling to go to school;
- changes their usual routine;
- takes unusual absences;
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- clings to adults;
- starts stammering;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning or feigning illness;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- lacks concentration;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions which are damaged or “go missing";
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened or refuses to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Prevention

We use a range of methods to help children prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these include:

- continually reinforcing school rules and values;
- setting challenges throughout the year that promote good behaviour towards one another;
- signing a behaviour contract and taking part in mentor meetings;
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying;
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly;
- making up role-plays having discussions about bullying and why it matters;
- Discriminatory language is not acceptable and will be challenged.

Additional preventative strategies include:

- effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos;
- use of curriculum opportunities (in particular, PSHCE can be used to discuss issues around diversity and draw out anti-bullying messages);
- use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year; and whole-school assemblies);
- engaging pupils in the process of developing the school Anti-Bullying Policy and promoting open and honest reporting;
- implementation of an E-Safety policy. Didcot Primary Academy has robust filtering and monitoring systems in place to safeguard pupils online. All online incidents, including cyberbullying, are recorded and investigated in line with this policy and our Online Safety Policy.
- improving the school environment, looking in particular at staff supervision patterns and the physical design of the building. Targeting our attention on key times and locations where bullying is more prevalent and working with pupils to establish when and where those times and locations are.
- Working closely with parents and carers at the earliest opportunity.

Bullying outside of School

This policy includes bullying that happens in journeys from and to school, in breakfast club and afterschool club and cyberbullying.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parent/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

Didcot Primary Academy recognises 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. DPA will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our Anti-bullying policy.

Responding to Bullying

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident must be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.

First Steps are to:

- listen carefully to the child and ascertain the fact;
- understand that further discussions and counselling of a victim may be required even where bullying behaviour is perceived rather than proven;
- investigate the incident as soon as possible;
- identify the pupils with the bullying behaviour;
- obtain witnesses if possible.

After an Incident:

- A clear account of the incident will be recorded on the school's online system (CPOMS) first and the Senior leadership team, including the DSL, will be made aware. If physical intervention has been used to avert immediate danger or personal injury this will be recorded and parents/carers will be informed the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable;
- A member of the senior leadership team will interview all concerned and will record the incident;
- Parents/carers will be kept informed;
- The parents/carers and child of the bully will communicate with the Senior Leader to discuss ways in which the problem can be worked through and will be given the support needed;
- The parents/carers and the child who has been bullied will communicate with the Senior Leader to discuss ways in which the bullying is going to be dealt with. This may include implementing disciplinary sanctions;
- If necessary and appropriate the police and social services will be consulted.

Pupils who have been bullied will be treated as being 'at risk' and will be supported by:

- offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice;
- reassuring the pupil and offering continuous support;
- agreement of effective ways for the pupil to quickly report any further incidents;
- end of day meetings with a member of staff to assess the day;
- restoring self-esteem and confidence;
- on-going support from all staff within the school.
- Peer groups where appropriate
- Home School Link worker where appropriate

Pupils who have bullied will be treated as being 'at risk' and be helped by:

- discussing what happened;
- discovering why the pupil became involved;

- establishing the wrong doing and need to change;
- informing parents/carers/carers to help change the attitude of the pupil;
- on-going support from all staff in the school.
- Peer groups where appropriate
- Home school link worker where appropriate

Discussions with the alleged child who displayed bullying behaviour should focus on the facts. They should be encouraged to tell the truth about the situation/incident. All discussions with the children should address 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. The adult should remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. 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 from reoccurring.

Outcomes

- the child may be asked to apologise;
- the child may have a sanction which will be designed to assist them account for their behaviour and to understand the harm they have caused;
- in serious cases the child/children may be excluded from the school;
- if possible the pupils will be reconciled;
- monitoring will take place to ensure that the bullying is not repeated;
- other pupils will see that bullying is not acceptable and not tolerated.

Additional Strategies

In conjunction with disciplinary sanctions, there are a range of other strategies that the school may use to combat bullying. These include:

- engaging with parents/carers promptly when issues of bullying come to light, whether their child is the one being bullied or the one doing the bullying;
- ensuring parents/carers are aware of the School's Complaints Policy and procedures;
- developing the roles that pupils can play (e.g. as trained peer mentors);
- establishing safer school partnerships with local police;
- restorative justice approaches which hold pupils to account for their behaviour and engages with them to agree the actions to be taken to repair the harm caused.

Responding to Cyberbullying

Any cyber bullying involving non-consensual images, severe harassment or grooming concerns must be escalated immediately to the DSL. School are not to receive non-consensual images but will assist parent/carers in next steps and escalation to police.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns: Social networking and Messaging apps: ,

1. Listen to the child or parent that is reporting the incident.
2. Reassure the pupil that they are safe and did nothing wrong by speaking up.
3. Ask parent/carer to assist in collecting evidence from the child's device at home:
    - **Whatsapp:** Screenshot the messages, dates, timestamps and the phone number /name of the sender. Export the chat if necessary

- **Other Apps (Instagram/TikTok/Snapchat)** Screenshot posts, comments, direct messages and user handles.

4. The parent will need to provide the evidence to school – screenshots or printed.
5. School will securely store the screenshots on CPOMS if a bullying incident has taken place.
6. Once screen shots have been provided, the member of SLT will determine if further investigation is required.
7. Investigate and Establish facts
    - The DSL or senior leader will conduct age-appropriate , sensitive conversations with involved pupils individually to establish the facts.
    - Check if the cyber-bullying involves a class or year group WhatsApp group.
8. Parent/carers of all children involved will be contacted to discuss the outcome.
9. This will include evidence but also discussions involving screen time, device parental controls and age-appropriate use of apps.
10. Parents will be provided with digital safety resources.
11. Proportionate consequences in line with the school behaviour policy will be applied.
12. Impacted classes will received further targeted education on digital kindness, online age limits and the impact of hurtful words in messaging groups.
13. If an unmonitored group chat exists among classmates, issue a general safety reminder to all year group parents regarding age limits on messaging apps.
14. Conduct regular, informal checks with the pupil over the following weeks to monitor classroom dynamics and ensure no playground retaliation occurs.
15. Follow up with parent/carers to ensure device safety settings and app removals have been implemented.

Reporting and Recording Incidents of Bullying

We encourage pupils, parents/carers and all staff to report bullying using a variety of methods:

- pupils may speak to their teachers;
- pupils speak to a peer or teaching assistant
- parents/carers speak to their child's teacher or use email or the book bag message book to inform the teacher;
- parents/carers inform the School Office staff.

Any incidents of bullying are recorded on the school on line reporting system and may be reported to the local authority on request. Keeping records of bullying incidents will enable the school to:

- manage individual cases effectively;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies;
- celebrate the anti-bullying work of the school;
- demonstrate defensible decision making in the event of complaints being made;
- engage and inform multi-agency teams as necessary.

In addition to immediate short-term monitoring, the school will review, over two or three months, whether the action has prevented recurrence of the bullying and ensured that the pupil being bullied feels safe again. The Senior Leadership Team regularly analyses bullying data, including by type of incident and pupil characteristics, to identify patterns and inform preventative strategies.

Staff professional development

The school will review general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development (CPD) and identify how to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice. The school will ensure that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems and sources of support are available. The school will identify where to source specialist skills to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils. Where specific training needs have been identified for particular members of staff, the Principal will ensure that those members of staff have access to the advice, training and development opportunities appropriate to their needs. Staff can raise concerns about bullying or safeguarding practices in confidence through the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Help Organisations & Links:

Key contact information is displayed around our school site.

KIDSCAPE Parents/carers Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4): 0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus: 0808 800 2222
Youth Access: 020 8772 9900
Bullying Online: www.bullying.co.uk
Children's Rights Director: 08005280731
Childline: 08001111

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Principal and Behaviour Lead will continuously monitor entries on CPOMS to identify any patterns. A summary of all entries will be reviewed by the SLT each term. Action points will be agreed and discussed with staff. The Principal will include behaviour and an anti-bullying update in her termly report to the Multi-Academy Trust. SLT review behaviour patterns weekly.

Checklist for managing a bullying incident - follow the guidelines for all involved:

1. Ensure that an appropriate adult meets with the target of the bullying. Follow interview guidelines and record.
2. Listen to other young people who may have observed the incident. Follow interview guidelines and record.
3. Ensure that appropriate adult meets with the young person alleged to be responsible. Follow interview guidelines and record.
4. If there is evidence or admission of bullying, issue appropriate sanctions following Anti-Bullying policy and behaviour policy. If you are using a restorative approach provide opportunity for young person to reflect and consider how they might make amends.
5. Consider whether the impact of bullying is severe enough to warrant this being a safeguarding issue. If appropriate refer to designated safeguarding lead.
6. If no bullying has taken place, or there is insufficient evidence, consider what further action is needed to reassure and meet the needs of those concerned

7. Inform the target of outcomes and actions taken. Keep them informed throughout. Provide on-going support
8. Inform the young person responsible of outcomes and actions taken, ekep them informed throughout. Provide on-going support
9. Contact the parent/carers of the target of the bullying. Inform them of the incident and offer appropriate support. Keep them informed throughout.
10. Contact the parent/carers of the young person responsible for the bullying. Inform them of the incident and offer appropriate support. Keep them informed throughout.
11. Where a criminal offence has been committed, consider reporting the incident to the police or inform parents of the target that they may want to do so
12. Consider what additional input is required in terms of: proactive work to address prejudice or promote diversity, work with class or year group, assembly, individual or group work with young people concerned, referral to outside agencies etc. If concerns are serious, visit the OSCB website to consider whether referral for further child and family support might be appropriate
13. Monitor the situation and review with all parties to ensure the bullying has stopped.
14. Review how successful your approach has been. What additional preventative measures need to be in place?