



Anti-Bullying Policy

For Abbots Green Academy, part of the Unity Schools Partnership



This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Positive Behaviour Policy, November 2023
- Online Safety Policy, September 2023
- Safeguarding Policy, September 2023
- Child Protection Procedures, September 2023

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England, May 2023
- Behaviour in Schools, September 2022
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022
- Preventing and tackling bullying - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017

Date of Review:	January 2024
It was approved by the Abbots Green Local Governing Body on: 7 th February 2024	
Date of next Review:	September 2024

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This policy is based on DfE's guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE's statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023'

Context

At Abbots Green, we recognise that negative behaviours, especially those left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental health and well-being. By effectively preventing and addressing relational conflict and bullying, our school will remain a safe and nurturing environment where all children are able to grow as individuals.

Aims

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community is respected, supported and valued. The aim of this policy is to prevent and address all forms of relational conflict and bullying by developing a valued school ethos in which these behaviours are regarded as unacceptable.

We aim to:

- Create a safe and secure environment.
- Distinguish and define the difference between incidents that are relational conflict those that are bullying
- Provide a consistent school response to any conflicts that may occur.
- Make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying and make clear each person's responsibilities about the prevention of bullying in our school.

Definition of Relational Conflict

- At Abbots Green, we will use the term 'relational conflict' when discussing friendship fallouts or incidents occurring between pupils that do not fall into the category of bullying. Relational conflict usually involves individuals or groups where the behaviours happen occasionally and could be considered accidental. Usually, following an incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or resolve the conflict.
- It is important to recognise that not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but schools must be aware that some do – we must bear in mind 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.
- Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', schools need to address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Schools must monitor children following a 'relational conflict' to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Schools must challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure the bullying does not continue and that all pupils feel supported.

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Definition of Bullying

At Abbots Green we consider bullying to be pre-meditated 'behaviour taken by an individual, or group, repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally' (DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying, July 2017').

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.

Terminology used within this policy – taken directly from KCSiE, Sep, 2023

"Victims and alleged perpetrator(s) For the purposes of this guidance, we, in places, use the term 'victim'. It is a widely recognised and understood term. It is important that schools and colleges recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Ultimately, schools and colleges should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable. For the purpose of this advice, we, in places, use the term 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and where appropriate 'perpetrator(s)'. These are widely used and recognised terms and the most appropriate to aid effective drafting of guidance. However, schools and colleges should think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. As above, the use of appropriate terminology will be for schools and colleges to determine, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis."

Where does bullying take place?

At Abbots Green Academy, 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)

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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.

Responsibilities

All staff

At Abbots Green Academy, we pride ourselves in the commitment to our positive behaviour policy. We record relevant observations that build up an accurate reflection of our pupils - these include records of concern as well as the monitoring of daily behaviours through the application of our zone boards).

Staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. Whenever a member of staff is alerted to the fact that bullying may be taking place, the Head teacher must be informed.

When incidents of bullying are suspected, support for all those that have been involved will be provided. This may be directed by the class teacher, our pastoral team or other significant and familiar adults, but will always be in partnership with the Head teacher. All staff support children to establish a climate of trust and respect for all in line with our Rainbow Values. As a school, we use positive praise, rewards and recognition of the success of all children, with the commitment to prevent any incidents of bullying.

Parents/carers

We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been involved in a relational conflict or bullying.

We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child, that 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/) to explain their concerns during the hours of a school day. The class teacher will take an initial record 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 incident on the school's Safeguarding recording system (CPOMS) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. CPOMS is continually monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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

Our school remains committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of relational conflict and bullying 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.

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Head teacher

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to:

- implement the school anti-bullying policy and to ensure that all staff recognise its importance, and know how to deal with incidents of relational conflict or bullying
- to report to the Governing Body about any reported incidents of concern
- to create a culture where all children know what bullying is and that it will not be accepted
- Lead the school vision with a culture of mutual respect therefore making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

Governors

Governors have a critical role in supporting the Head teacher and the wider leadership team – they will:

- Monitor the incidents of bullying and review the effectiveness of the school's policy
- They should ensure that the Head teacher keeps accurate records of behaviour including relational conflict and bullying.
- Respond within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying or relational conflict. In all cases, the Governing Body should notify the Head teacher and asks him/her to investigate the case and to report back to a representative of the Governing Body.

How our school will respond to a reported incident:

At Abbots Green Academy, all reports of concerning 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 staff use a contextual approach to behaviour and safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Our 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)
- 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
- 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 behaviour is taking place off the school premises (e.g., the Police, secondary schools 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

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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 alleged perpetrator, 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 – a DSL may then refer to the Professional Consultation Line or Suffolk MASH to seek further advice.

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.

Professional Development

At Abbots Green Academy, we continue to:

- Train all staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures - including recording and reporting incidents
- Consider a range of enrichment opportunities, shared experiences, roles and responsibilities that highlight the importance of our vision and values. These include (but are not limited to) whole-school participation in
 - Anti-Bullying Week
 - UNICEF rights respecting school award
 - Well-being Detectives (including the Well-being award)
 - a robust PSHE & RSE curriculum
 - Online Officers
 - Safety Squad
 - Kindness Day

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and monitored by the governing body.

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