



# ACORN MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Thorncombe St Mary's CofE Primary Academy

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Document control table			
Behaviour & Safeguarding Policy	<b>Document Title:</b>	Anti-bullying Policy	
	<b>Version number:</b>	V1	
<b>Author (Job title):</b>		Head of School/Clerk	
<b>Staff responsibility: (name or post)</b>		Head of School	
<b>Source</b>		Exeter Diocese 'Valuing all God's Children	
<b>Date formally approved &amp; adopted:</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	<b>Formal approval of template by:</b>	Trust Board
<b>Review information:</b>	<i>Every three years</i>	<b>Next Review Due By: November 2026</b>	
<b>This policy must be read in conjunction with the following policies:</b> Acceptable Use Policies Anti-racism Policy Behaviour Complaints Policy		Equality Policy Online Safety Policy PSHE & RSHE Policy Safeguarding Policy	
Document History			
Nov 2023	Clerk	New template	

## Introduction

# Vision and Values

**At Thorncombe, St Mary's CE Primary Academy, we believe the purpose of education is to nurture and enable every child to thrive and to achieve their full potential. Our vision encapsulates this:**

### **Living, Learning and Growing Together**

*Through living, learning and growing together, we nurture each individual's uniqueness and potential so that they may enjoy life in all its fullness (John 10:10).*

## Our Christian Core Values

**As a Church of England school, we have six core values that permeate through all that we do. Our core values guide us all and help us to reflect upon how we can be compassionate, respectful, aspirational individuals with the resilience to cope with the challenges of life.**

**Our six core values are:**

- Love and Compassion
- Thankfulness
- Service
- Hope
- Forgiveness
- Endurance

Each half term, we focus on one of these core values during our daily collective worships. We award 'core value apples' to children who have been recognised as demonstrating our core values and these can be found on our 'Living, Learning and Growing Tree' which takes pride of place in our school hall.

## **School statement on bullying**

We believe that all people are made in the image of God and are unconditionally loved by God. Everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone should be able to flourish in a loving and hospitable community.

Acorn Multi Academy Trust recognises that all pupils whatever their creed, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation or academic ability have the right to feel safe and secure when they come to school. Everyone in the school community has the right to feel free from threat, harassment, discrimination or any type of bullying behaviour. Pupils should also feel safe when reporting incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying, to members of staff without fear of reprisals.

We operate the Anti-Bullying Policy proactively, fairly and consistently to all pupils. We are committed to continuously improving our approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring and reviewing the impact of our preventative measures

We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated within each school community and across Acorn Multi Academy Trust.

We seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and will utilise support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

### **Aims of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

In order to achieve this, the school will:

- Meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an Anti-Bullying Policy in place.
- Ensure a safe and secure environment free from threat, harassment, discrimination or any type of bullying behaviour.
- Create an environment where all are treated with dignity and respect and where all members of the school community understand that bullying is not acceptable.
- Ensure a consistent approach to preventing, challenging and responding to incidents of bullying that occur.
- Inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and foster a productive partnership which helps to maintain a bullying-free environment.
- Ensure all directors, local governors, pupils and parents/guardians understand what bullying is and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Assure pupils and parents/guardians that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Ensure that there is a procedure to follow (including reporting to the local authority where appropriate) when incidences of bullying occur and that this procedure is made clear to all staff and pupils (see Behaviour Policy)
- Follow up every incident of alleged bullying to ensure that the victim is given as much support as possible.
- Inform parents of both the victim and bully of the action being taken by the school and what they can do to reinforce and support this.
- Ensure that all pupils have an identified trusted person (normally the class teacher) to talk to confidentially. Pupils need to know that something will be done if they report any bullying and are reassured that the incident will be handled in a sensitive manner.

- Ensure that all areas of school are monitored during play/lunch times.
- Set out procedures for dealing effectively with specific complaints from parents (please refer to the Acorn [Complaints Procedure](#)).
- Provide pastoral support that enables pupils to have easy access to their teachers where they can discuss issues of concern, such as bullying, in a confidential setting.
- Use whole school initiatives (e.g. Collective Worship, celebration assembly) and teaching strategies (PHSE, citizenship lessons, Circle Time) as a positive means of combating bullying.
- Endeavour to create a positive, caring ethos within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

## Definition of bullying

**Bullying** may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where the person committing the behaviour has been informed of their behaviour and have continued to behave in this way, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying may or may not be because of a protected characteristic (sometimes referred to as ‘identity-based bullying’).

**Prejudice-related incidents** are one-off incidents relating to a protected characteristic, which may or may not be directed at an individual. They may or may not be carried out with the intention to harm or cause offence.

## Forms of bullying, prejudice and racism incidents (BPRI)

BPRIs can take many forms including:

<b>Verbal</b>	Name-calling and ridicule such as racist or homophobic remarks.
<b>Visual</b>	Graffiti, gestures, wearing racist insignia or showing pictures.
<b>Incitement</b>	Spreading rumours or encouraging others to participate.
<b>Cyber</b>	Using technology such as text messages, social media or email.
<b>Segregation</b>	Excluding, isolating, ignoring or avoiding an individual from the activities or social acceptance of their peer group.
<b>Physical</b>	Hitting, pushing, unwanted touching, kicking, threatening with a weapon.
<b>Property</b>	Theft or damage to personal property; extortion.

All have an emotional impact on an individual, and the effects of verbal incidents should not be underestimated.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- Racism)
- Homophobia / biphobia
- Sexism / Sexual harassment
- Disability related
- Religion or belief related
- Gender identity
- Related to the target’s perceived characteristics
- Related to the perceived characteristics of someone the target associates with (family member, friend etc).

**Bullying is not ....**

It is important to understand that bullying is not the *odd* occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone.

**It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose.**

Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all must learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships. Our trust understands our responsibility to deliver a high-quality, age-appropriate and evidence-based relationships, sex and health curriculum for all our pupils. This is set out in our Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

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

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine/route to school
- Begins truanting
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to under-perform in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go 'missing'
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Becomes isolated from friends
- Stays close to adults

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

### **Bullying outside of school**

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during school holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber bullying in particular means that it can impact on pupils' wellbeing beyond the school day. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities outlined in this policy. Reporting could include to the following:

- Parent/carer
- School
- Police/101

- [CEOP Reporting](#)

The school will do what it can to support when bullying takes place outside of the school day. Schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable, following the procedures in the behaviour policy.

### **Prejudice based incidents**

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. Not all prejudice related incidents are racial. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school and by the local authority [Devon schools only].

### **Derogatory language**

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored. Actions and sanctions will be taken, if appropriate, for pupils and staff found using any such language. Staff are also encouraged to record the casual use of derogatory language using the school's safeguarding recording system CPOMs.

### **Preventative Policy**

The whole school policy is underpinned by a proactive, preventive approach which has proven highly successful in further improving the school's already low incidents of bullying. We involve all stakeholders at all levels of policy making. Our initiatives include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### **Prevention**

- a) Our Trust vision and school vision is at the heart of everything we do and ensures that all members of the school community are revered and respected as members of a community.
- b) The PSHE programme of study (Jigsaw) includes opportunities for pupils to understand about different types of bullying and what they can do to respond and prevent bullying. It also includes opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves, value others and appreciate and respect difference.
- c) School assemblies and Collective Worship explore the importance of inclusivity, dignity and respect as well as other themes that play a part in challenging bullying. They help to raise pupils' awareness of bullying and derogatory language.
- d) Difference and diversity are celebrated across the school through diverse displays, books and images. The whole school participates in events including Anti-Bullying Week and Black History Month.
- e) Through a variety of planned activities and time across the curriculum, pupils are given the opportunity to gain self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions.
- f) Regular opportunities are given to discuss issues that may arise in class and for teachers to target specific interventions.
- g) Organised activities at lunchtimes.
- h) Christian values, including of justice, love, kindness, friendship and respect are embedded across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible.
- i) Stereotypes are challenged by staff and pupils across the schools.

- j) Playground buddies, play leaders and intervention sessions offer support to all pupils, including those who may have been the target of bullying.

**Challenge unacceptable behaviour, including setting standards of acceptable behaviour and a culture of trust and respect**

- Challenge incidents sensitively, however small.
- Speak to those involved privately explaining why the behaviour is unacceptable.
- Seek to understand the aggressor's motivation and take action to address any concerns about wellbeing.
- Make the aggressor/s apologise for their behaviour once they understand why it was wrong.
- Use disciplinary action for more serious incidents.

Record all incidents that relate to bullying/peer on peer behaviour so an accurate record is kept to see if any patterns emerge.

## **Vulnerable Groups**

Children, if identified as belonging to a vulnerable group, receive highly effective and personalised intervention and support. This is further enhanced by integration, whenever possible, within mainstream classes.

Examples of specialised groups include:

- a) Military children
- b) Looked After Children
- c) Travellers
- d) Children of Faith
- e) Children from families of same sex parents
- f) Pupil Premium
- g) SEND children

Class teachers, support staff, management and governors/directors all meet with relevant key staff, e.g. SENCOs, to discuss provision and monitor impact. Staff monitor and record incidents that cause concern and open communication is encouraged with parents/carers where concerns are raised.

We actively promote Christian values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole school community. We want to enable our pupils to become responsible citizens and prepare them for life in modern Britain. These values reflect those expected in society, when they enter secondary school and beyond in the world of work.

Related policies which should be read in conjunction with this Anti-Bullying Policy are the Behaviour and Equality Policies, PSHE & RSHE Policy and Safeguarding Policies.

## **Cyberbullying**

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Refer to the [Childnet Cyberbullying guidance](#) and [DFE guidance for schools](#) as appropriate.
- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to endeavour that it does not happen again.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - looking at use of the school systems;
  - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
  - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and with reference to Childnet Cyberbullying guidance and the [DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'](#) document to ensure that the school's powers are used proportionately and lawfully.
  - requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online.

## **Procedures and Dealing with Incidents**

### **Helping children to understand bullying**

Children who know what bullying is, can better identify it and talk about bullying if it happens to them or others. Children need to know ways to safely stand up to bullying and how to get help.

- Children are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if they feel they are being bullied or see others being bullied. The adult can give comfort, support, and advice, even if they can't solve the problem directly.
- Talk about how to react to incidents. Give tips, like using humour and saying "stop" directly and confidently. Talk about what to do if those actions don't work, like walking away.
- There will be conversation to understand what strategies/procedures will be put into place to act on bullying.

### **Role of a pupil who sees someone being bullied**

By educating our pupils we can support those being bullied and have a united understanding that bullying is unacceptable and we cannot ignore it.

Children should be taught and regularly reminded to tell a trusted adult if they think someone is being bullied or they are being encouraged to behave in a way that could be viewed as bullying.

### **Guidance for parents**

If your child has been bullied:

- Calmly talk with your child about their experiences.
- Make a note of what your child says including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened.
- Reassure your child that they have done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.

- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur, they should report them to a teacher/adult in school immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher.
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing. The teacher may be unaware that there have been incidents.

If your child is bullying others:

- Talk with your child and explain that what they are doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher and explain the problems your child is experiencing as well as discussing how you can work together to stop them bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.

### **Role of the school**

Report what has happened and monitor those reports

- Fully investigate any allegations of bullying. A full written record of all incidents should be kept.
- Notify the victim's parents/guardians when appropriate
- Involve the police if the incident involves criminal activity/a serious offence.
- Written, dated records should be gained from the views of all involved; the bullied pupil, alleged perpetrator/s, relevant staff, witnesses, conversations with parents.
- All staff involved record incident on CPOMS, or other school safeguarding recording procedures
- For Devon schools, the local authority should be informed using the online [Devon BPRI](#) form and a copy saved in CPOMs.
- For Dorset schools, all BPRIs will be recorded on CPOMs under the appropriate heading.
- The Head of School will report the number of bullying incidents at least termly to governors in their Head of School report.

The following steps should also be followed in recording incidents of bullying and should act as a means of conveying to everyone how seriously the school regards bullying behaviour.

- The targeted pupil should record the events in writing with dates.
- The aggressor should record the events in writing with dates.
- The teacher should record their discussions with both parties.
- The parents/carers of the pupils should be contacted, and a meeting arranged to discuss the incident.
- All written records of the incident should be scanned and saved under the pupil in CPOMs; Devon schools will use the [Devon BPRI Online reporting form](#).
- The Pupil Behaviour Policy should be used when dealing with the bully.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Reviewing**

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for reporting headline information to the Trust Board of Directors as applicable. Heads of School are responsible for reporting to Local Governing Bodies and to the local authority where required. The MAT Senior Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy through in-school monitoring such as learning walks and focus groups with pupils. All stakeholders will have the opportunity to

feedback through parental and pupil questionnaires.

Local governors take responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies (including curriculum, policies and school vision and ethos) and ensure that regular reports about bullying and wellbeing are part of the cycle of governors' meetings.

This policy is part of our commitment to safeguarding children. It should be read in conjunction with our other safeguarding policies and procedures which promote safeguarding such as our Behaviour Policy, our Online Safety Policy and Safeguarding Policy. The policy will be reviewed every three years and its implementation and effectiveness assessed. This policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the School and Trust.

## Useful links and supporting organisations

There is a lot of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

<b>Name of Organisation</b>	<b>Tel No.</b>	<b>Website</b>
Act Against Bullying	Not available	<a href="http://www.actagainstbullying.com">www.actagainstbullying.com</a>
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793	<a href="http://www.ace-ed.org.uk">www.ace-ed.org.uk</a>
Anti-Bully	Not available	<a href="http://www.antibully.org.uk">www.antibully.org.uk</a>
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	No available	<a href="http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk">www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk</a>
Bully Free Zone	01204 454958	<a href="http://www.bullyfreezone.co.uk">www.bullyfreezone.co.uk</a>
Bullying UK	Not available	<a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>
<a href="https://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.org/">Bullying intervention group</a>		<a href="https://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.org/">https://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.org/</a>
BBC Bullying Survival Guide	Not available	<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/bully/index.htm">www.bbc.co.uk/education/bully/index.htm</a>
Childline	0800 1111 Helpline for children open 24 hours a day	<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>
DFE Guidance	Not available	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying</a>
The Diana Award		<a href="http://diana-award.org.uk/">http://diana-award.org.uk/</a> <a href="https://www.antibullyingpro.com/">https://www.antibullyingpro.com/</a>
Internet Matters	Not available	<a href="http://www.internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying/">www.internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying/</a>
Kidscape	020 7730 3300 (General enquiry numbers)	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a>
Parent line Plus	0808 800 2222	<a href="http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk">www.parentlineplus.org.uk</a>

UK Safer Internet	Not available	<a href="http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/">www.saferinternet.org.uk/</a>
UK Council for child internet safety	Not Available	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis">www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis</a>

\* DCSF Guidance “Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools”

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/safetolearn/>

\*\*Anti Bullying Alliance guidance

[http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/Page.asp?originx\\_4237co\\_4721421398769u17h\\_2007627412x](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/Page.asp?originx_4237co_4721421398769u17h_2007627412x)

Church of England guidance

[Valuing All God’s Children Guidance for Church of England schools on challenging homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying](#)