

Anti-Bullying Policy

Downholland Haskayne CE Primary School

November 2026

Key Contacts

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Safeguarding Governor	Carly Cleator
Last Updated	November 2026
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Statement of intent

Downholland Haskayne CE Primary School believes that all children are entitled to learn in an environment where they feel safe, respected and included, free from experiences of harm, including bullying. Our school does not tolerate any form of bullying and action will be taken to prevent bullying and intervene where it is identified with the primary aim of safeguarding our children and school communities.

Downholland Haskayne CE Primary School acknowledges that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on people. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying whilst at school does not only affect people during their childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into the future.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst children. These measures are part of this policy and the school's Behaviour Policy, communicated and accessible to all children, school staff and parents.

Downholland Haskayne CE Primary School and all our schools will work closely with children and their families to prevent bullying, providing support and reducing any future instances in order to maintain a safe and supported school experience for all children.

This policy sets out our responsibilities, including procedures, to prevent and address all forms of bullying.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DCMS, DSIT, and UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2. Definitions

Downholland Haskayne CE Primary School acknowledges that both friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting, but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Friendship problems include instances where both children disagree and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. There may be repeated incidents, but without an imbalance of power present, and may be accidental. Friendship problems are a part of expected childhood experience where children learn skills to resolve difficulties in relationships. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour.

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable children are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable children may include, but are not limited to those who:

- Are cared for in children's homes or by foster carers (Children Looked After)
- Have previously been in care (including adoption and Special guardianship Orders)
- Have additional or special educational needs or a disability
- Are from minoritised ethnic backgrounds
- Are, or are perceived to be, part of the LGBTQ+ community
- Speak English as an additional language
- Have experienced adversity, including but not exclusively, loss/bereavement, abuse/neglect, poverty, domestic abuse
- Transfer to school mid-way through a year
- Are displaced – including asylum seekers, refugees and children entering refuge

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal (name calling, put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, name calling, excessive criticism or sarcasm)
- Physical (hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, breaking or taking property)
- Emotional (rumours or stories, exclusion from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass, withholding friendship or affection)
- Online (cyberbullying, sending fake pictures/pictures without consent, targeting through group chats, phone calls, threats made via social media, AI produced imagery)

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Governors are responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any children on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that all govenrors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at point of induction.
- Ensuring that all schools operate in line with our school values, recognising and celebrating the individuality of all of our children.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within school to carry out the duties of the role.

- Ensuring that the appointed Safeguarding governor works with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including anti-bullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that safeguarding, including online safety are taught as part of the curriculum.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is communicated and accessible to all members of the school community and is implemented fully and consistently.
- Ensuring that all reported instances of bullying are recorded using the school's safeguarding recording system, CPOMS, and ensure monitoring of timeliness and impact of actions taken to make sure issues are promptly and effectively managed.
- Ensure effective reporting mechanisms are in place for bullying for children, families and staff through both online and in person means.
- Analysing the data on bullying on a regular basis to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented at a whole school level.
- Report to governors on bullying data, trends and actions taken to address.
- Ensuring staff access appropriate training.
- Implementing a personal development curriculum that includes bullying.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Working with the Headteacher to ensure instances of bullying are effectively dealt with.
- Where required, managing referrals to external agencies and coordinating a multi-agency response.
- Ensuring staff are aware that bullying can fall under the category of child-on-child abuse.
- Making inquiries into circumstances outside of school, including at home, for children who are being bullied and bullying others.
- Monitoring the recording of incidents to ensure accurate information is appropriately recorded using the school's recording systems.
- Support staff in producing effective risk management plans to ensure any going risk of bullying in specific circumstances is mitigated.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for children who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing pastoral staff where there are concerns.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a child for support.

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing staff in school if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.
- Supporting intervention where bullying has been identified.

Children are responsible for:

- Meeting the standards outlined in the Behaviour Policy and ensuring that they act in line with the ethos of the school and wider school values.
- Informing a trusted adult if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Ensure appropriate use of technology and that their online behaviour complies with the same high standards outlined in the Behaviour Policy, ethos of the school.

4. Statutory requirements

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

5. Signs of bullying

Signs of bullying often overlap with indicators of other types of abuse, and it's important that staff use professional curiosity to explore the cause of these indicators. Signs of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Being frightened of walking to or from school
- Changes in children's usual routine for example unwilling to go to school
- Appearing withdrawn, often alone at breaktimes/lunchtimes
- Internal truancy, including spending unauthorised time in the toilets
- Emerging signs of mental health difficulties
- Difficulty sleeping
- Property that is damaged (including school books and personal possessions)
- Reports of feeling ill regularly, wanting to stay at home or be sent home from school
- Unexplained injuries
- Wanting to spend increasing time with staff at unstructured times
- Change of behaviour around use of technology

Staff will be alerted to the signs of bullying, but also be aware that just because there aren't any observable indicators, this does not mean a child is not or hasn't experienced bullying and every report will be taken seriously, regardless of the presence of indicators. Where staff are concerned, they should report their concerns to class teachers. Where there are safeguarding concerns, report directly to the DSL and/or Headteacher.

6. Prevention

School will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying and have a clear set of values and standards which will be regularly promoted across the whole school,

including clear sanctions for bullying.

All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the relationships and health education curriculum, in line with the Relationships and Health Education Policy.

Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

Children identified as vulnerable will be reviewed by key staff in regular meetings so that appropriate support can be implemented where appropriate.

All schools will ensure that children who have bullied are also supported in understanding the impact of their behaviour and how they can behave differently.

7. Child-on-child abuse

Our school does not tolerate any form of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate children about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.

Children will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children's social care and potentially the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

All staff will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that children may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Children being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened.

More information on child-on-child abuse can be found in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

8. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target children, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling.

Downholland Haskayne CE Primary School does not tolerate cyberbullying. All schools view cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will ensure that swift action is taken if there are any incidents identified.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – children may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – children may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and children may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to children crossing boundaries without realising
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – children may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

In some instances, in accordance with the Education Act 2011, schools may examine and delete files from children' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

Where content on a device is suspected to be involving a criminal offence, the school will not delete the material and will work with the police to provide as possible evidence. Where there is a possibility of material that could include child sexual imagery, including AI images, staff will not view the material, nor delete it, but will work with external agencies including police and Children's Social Care where relevant for an appropriate response.

9. Procedures

Children are encouraged to report any negative behaviour, even if they are not sure whether it is bullying. They can do this through:

- Speaking to member of staff in school.
- Speaking to a parent/other adult who then may contact the school in any of the ways listed

When bullying is known to have happened or be ongoing:

A chosen trusted adult (this could be the class teacher, teaching assistant or a member of the team) will be the first point of contact to discuss the incidents with the child.

It is important that all staff know it is their responsibility to make the child feel heard and taken seriously.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- All children involved will be spoken to separately.
- If appropriate, children may be asked to provide a written account or to express themselves in a way they are most comfortable.
- Evidence of a cyberbullying may be requested by staff investigating.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and keeping in mind any safeguarding issues which may be co-existing with the incidents of bullying, for both the child who has been bullied and the child who has bullied.
- Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.
- For very serious incidents of bullying, dynamic risk management strategies might be implemented whilst the incident is being investigated.
- Staff will consider the ongoing support needs of all children involved, including referrals to Early Help services.

10. Sanctions

Decisions on whether bullying has taken place will be made in line with balance of probability from the information available/obtained through the investigation.

All schools will always ensure an appropriate balance between sanctions, risk assessment and ongoing support for those involved in bullying.

Sanctions will be in line with the individual school's behaviour procedures, however some examples are below:

- Parental contact
- Restorative conversations
- Internal exclusions
- Exclusion from social times (e.g. breaktimes and lunchtimes)
- Suspension

Where the bullying is so severe and/or persistent, school may issue a permanent exclusion and/or report the incident to the police.

This is not an exhaustive list, but does highlight some commonly used sanctions to address bullying.

11. Support

Staff ensure that there is appropriate ongoing support for children who have been bullied as well as children who have bullied. This will include strategies like those listed below:

- Regular and planned check ins with key staff member of their choosing (where possible)
- Increased staff monitoring
- Emotional support through external services
- Involvement of Police Early Action Team
- Use of an Alternative Provision

Where deemed required by the Headteacher, school might use a risk assessment to ensure ongoing safeguarding of children in school following an incident of bullying. This might include strategies like those listed below:

- Allocated zones offered to minimise potential contact between children involved in bullying
- Daily monitoring by staff
- Monitoring CCTV footage in line with school policy
- A managed transfer to another school or use of Alternative Provision

12. Bullying outside of school

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school.

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to sanction children for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate children's conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to sanction children for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, e.g. on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon.

If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

13. Monitoring, review and contact details

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head for Downholland Haskayne Primary School.