Anti-Bullying Policy

Ferndale Primary School
School Policies – JUNE 2025
Review – June 2028

Statement of Intent

At Ferndale we wish to ensure that the education our children receive takes place in an atmosphere, which is caring and protective. We, like all schools, have a responsibility to create a secure and safe environment for the pupils who are in our care. Parents must be able to send their children to school confident in the knowledge that they will be protected from bullying.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different (appropriate) ways of behaving. At Ferndale Primary School, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Our school values – Respect, Equality, Teamwork and Honesty – are key to ensuring that all pupils and adults feel safe and secure in school.

The document Keeping Children Safe in Education was reissued to schools in 2021 detailing statutory guidance, placing a duty on schools to promote the welfare of children. This policy complies with the government guidance stated in the KCSIE 2024 (or most recent version) document.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

- The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an Anti-Bullying Policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will consistently and swiftly follow this policy when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PSHE - Personal, Social, Health and Emotional Education and RSHE – (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

Equality

- We are committed to equal opportunities for all irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, disability or religion. We will monitor the impact of this policy to ensure that no group is adversely affected.
- Ferndale treats bullying with regards to each protected characteristic as seriously as all other forms of bullying and has a duty to foster good relations between pupils as part of its Public Sector Equality Duty. The Protected Characteristics are:

- Race and Ethnicity,
- Religion and Belief,
- Sexual Orientation,
- Sex,

- Disability,
- Age,
- Gender Reassignment,
- Pregnancy and Maternity,
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

- Looked after Children and those in Care

What Is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying, however, the DFE (Department For Education) states that bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

The Anti – Bullying Alliance define bullying as:

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online."

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Bullying is hurtful or unkind behaviour which is deliberate and repeated. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards an individual or group.

In Sandwell, we use the acronym **STOP – it happens Several Times On Purpose**, with several meaning a significant number of incidents over a period of time, not a small number of incidents within a relatively short timescale.

Bullying can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical intimidation, assault on persons and / or their property physically or emotionally. It is ongoing and repeated behaviour over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves.

Bullying may be bought to the attention of any member of staff by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

Forms of Bullying

- *Physical* – Hitting, Kicking, taking / damaging belongings.
- *Emotional* – acting in a way to cause emotional upset e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures, spreading rumours, excluding someone from groups.
- *Verbal* – Name – calling, insults, racist remarks, remarks about disabilities / differences.
- *Indirect* – Spreading rumours / stories about someone, excluding children from social groups, gesturing/body language.
- *Cyber* – all areas of internet e.g. email , internet chat room misuse , mobile threats – texts, phone calls, other technology e.g. camera / video.
- *Psychological* – such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people
- *Attacking property* – such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone's possessions.

Child on child abuse

Not all instances of child on child abuse amount to bullying, however, KCSIE 2024 highlights the need for all schools to be vigilant and recognise the many types of child on child abuse where through violence, sexual violence and online abuse, children can be exploited, bullied or harmed by their peers. Staff need to be aware of this and that it can happen both inside and outside of school.

Bullying can be:

- Religious – taunting with reference to religious or non-religious beliefs, affiliation or faith background.
- Sexual – Abusive name calling, comments about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty, inappropriate and uninvited touching, sexual innuendos and propositions (sexual harassment)
- Racist – including ethnicity, cultural, National origin or National status, racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Homophobic – reference to the actual or perceived sexuality of a person of their friends or family, including, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender or because of their appearance, behaviours, other physical traits.
- Against someone with a disability.
- Gender and gender identity – reference to gender variance and gender identity.
- Prejudice related (if not mentioned above).
- Adult- pupil; adult – adult; pupil- pupil (peer to peer).

Bullying of vulnerable groups:

Ferndale Primary School is an inclusive school. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are. We recognise that some circumstances can make a child more vulnerable, such as:

- Having a special educational need, communication difficulties or a disability
- Being gifted or talented
- Being missing from education
- Having a family member in prison
- A child at risk of sexual exploitation
- A child witnessing domestic abuse
- When a family experiences financial hardship and homelessness

Everyone involved in the school is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times, offering mentoring and support as needed.

No form of bullying will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously.

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. 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, particularly in Early years and KS 1, when children are still working out how to make meaningful relationships and will sometimes make the wrong choices, resulting in unkind words or actions towards others. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

We recognise that bullying can be a subjective experience and that there are times when a child may feel that they are the victim of bullying, even if it does not meet the threshold for bullying as stated in this

policy. They may feel all the symptoms of a child that is being bullied and will require the same support as any other victim to work through the emotions that they are feeling in order to move forward.

Where does bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground, through anonymous channels eg Cyber Bullying .

Although Ferndale Primary is not directly responsible for bullying taking place on the way to and from school, if both victim and the bully are from our school, action can be taken as if the incident has occurred within the school, this includes informing parents. However, if bullying takes place outside of school at any other time, school will not issue sanctions, but we will inform parents of incidents reported.

Ferndale is unable to take action if the incident is off site and is between adult and adult or adult and child, this will be dealt with by the police. However, if an incident between an adult and a child is reported on school premises, then Ferndale will refer to the Parental Behaviour Policy and take appropriate action. This may include a warning letter to parents or a ban from school premises (see Parental Behaviour Policy).

If a child from Ferndale Primary is involved in a bullying incident with a child from another school we will liaise with the other school to ensure that there is no reoccurrence. Where possible, Ferndale Primary will support pupils who have been bullied, by pupils from another school or by other persons, especially on their way to or from school. In these circumstances, the following steps should be taken.

- Talk to the local Community Police Officer about problems on the streets
- Talk to the Head Teachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises
- Discuss coping strategies with parents
- Talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises

What is Cyber Bullying:

Cyber bullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

What's different about cyberbullying? Bullying is not new, but some features of cyberbullying are different from other forms of bullying:

24/7 and the invasion of home/personal space - Cyber bullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.

The audience can be very large and reached rapidly - The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for victims to move on.

People who cyberbully may attempt to remain anonymous - This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyberbullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.

The profile of the bully and target - Cyber bullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size are not important. Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image.

Some instances of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional - It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of

the consequences – for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.

Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence - This is one of the reasons why it's important to know how to respond.

Responding to Cyber bulling

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, and therefore all schools should already be equipped to deal with the majority of cases through their existing anti-bullying policies and procedures. At Ferndale Primary the following steps will be followed:

1. **Supporting the person being bullied**
    - Give reassurance that the person has done the right thing by telling someone, refer to any existing pastoral support/procedures and inform parents.
    - Advise on next steps:
    - Make sure the person knows not to retaliate or return the message.
    - Ask the person to think about what information they have in the public domain.
    - Help the person to keep relevant evidence for any investigation (e.g. by not deleting messages they've received, and by taking screen capture shots and noting web addresses of online cyberbullying instances).
    - Check the person understands simple ways to prevent it from happening again, e.g. by changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chatroom
    - Take action to contain the incident when content has been circulated:
    - If you know who the person responsible is, ask them to remove the content;
    - Contact the host (e.g. the social networking site) to make a report to get the content taken down.
    - Use disciplinary powers to confiscate phones that are being used to cyberbully. Ask the pupil to tell you who they have sent messages on to.
    - In cases of illegal content, contact the police, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

2. **Investigating incidents of cyber bullying**

    - All bullying incidents should be properly recorded and investigated. Cyberbullying can be a very serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence. In UK law, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment or threatening and menacing communications.
    - Advise pupils and staff to try and keep a record of the bullying as evidence. It can be useful to show parents, teachers, pastoral care staff and the police, if necessary, what has happened.
    - Take steps to identify the bully, including looking at the school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary. The police will need to be involved to enable the service provider to look into the data of another user.

3. **Working with the bully and sanctions**

Once the person bullying is identified, steps should be taken to change their attitude and behaviour as well as ensuring access to any support that is required. Factors to consider when determining the appropriate sanctions include:

    - The impact on the victim: was the bully acting anonymously, was the material widely circulated and humiliating, how difficult was controlling the spread of the material?

- The motivation of the bully: was the incident unintentional or retaliation to bullying behaviour from others?

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Ferndale staff all watch for early signs of distress in pupils, 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. These might include:

● unwillingness to come to school;

● withdrawn, isolated behaviour;

● sudden changes in behaviour: becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;

● anxious or lacking in confidence;

● complaining about missing possessions;

● refusal to talk about the problem;

● being easily distressed;

● damaged or incomplete work;

● issues with eating/food;

● unexplained bruises/cuts/marks on body.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

In response to a complaint of bullying, the discipline procedures of Ferndale Primary should be followed, with staff making a full investigation, keeping accurate records on CPOMs and applying sanctions as necessary.

The school procedures should be followed initially by the class teacher, then the Phase leader. The Deputy Head Teacher and Head Teacher will be informed when they become aware that there may be bullying taking place.

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Ferndale Primary School. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step-by-step procedure can be used in responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

- Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
- Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
- The allegation will be recorded on CPOMs
- Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
- Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.

- Staff will reinforce to the alleged bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- The alleged bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied (see next section).
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the alleged bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
- In cases of bullying, the incidents and follow up actions will be recorded by staff on CPOMS and any relevant protected characteristic will be ticked to allow analysis.
- Parents will be informed and will be invited into school for a meeting to discuss the situation.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Bullying incidents will be discussed with relevant staff.
- A Bullying Response plan may be written to reduce the risk of further incidents (see appendix 2)
- The safeguarding Governor will present reports on bullying incidents to the Governors, these may form part of HT reports also.
- If necessary and appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Social care or Police will be consulted.

The following sanctions may be used:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Loss of privileges
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult in 'reflection'
- Be removed from class and work in isolation (internal exclusion)
- Report to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visit, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum.
- Fixed term exclusions of various lengths, at the discretion of the headteacher
- Permanent exclusion

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies, together the school's behaviour system will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These can include:

- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the safety in the school such as the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Awareness raising through regular Anti-Bullying assemblies and/or Anti Bullying Week .
- PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Emotional) used to support this policy.
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of children volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulties
- Children writing stories and poems and drawing pictures about bullying
- Children being read stories about bullying
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters and displays, including those produced by the children around the school

- Using praise and Dojo rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Visitors to school e.g. police, Anti Bullying Roadshow
- Online safety/cyber bullying lessons
- Mentoring
- A comprehensive well being programme
- Use of the school mentor
- A book provided to support
- Worry boxes

Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated annually. Surveys, focus groups, children's and parents'/guardians' comments posted in the 'Worry' and 'Bully' box and CPOMS may be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy and to report on any bullying against the protected characteristics .

Please also refer to the following policies:

Behaviour Policy
Online Safety Policy
Positive Handling Policy
Code of Conduct Policy
School Safeguarding Policy
Parental Behaviour Policy

Policy Reviewed and updated June 2025

Sources of further information, support and help

There is a vast amount 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.

Name of organisation	Telephone number	Website
Act Against Bullying	0845 230 2560	www.actagainstbullying.org
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Kidscape	0300 102 4481	https://www.kidscape.org.uk/
BBC	not available	www.bbc.co.uk
Childline	0800 1111 (helpline for children)	www.childline.org.uk
Childnet	02076396967	https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/online-bullying/
Youngminds	02070895050	https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/bullying/
NSPCC	0207 825 2500	www.nspcc.org.uk
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222	www.parentlineplus.org.uk

The Children's Legal Centre	0800 783 2187	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
The Office of the Children's Commissioner	0844 800 9113	www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk
UK Government Website	not available	www.direct.gov.uk

Appendix 1

My Bullying Diary		
When you are talking about bullying, be clear about		
Date:	Time:	
1. What has happened to you?		
2. When did it happen to you?		
3. Who was involved?		
4. Who saw what was happening?		
5. Where did it happen?		
6. What did you do about it?		
Date:	Time:	
1. What has happened to you?		
2. When did it happen to you?		
3. Who was involved?		
4. Who saw what was happening?		
5. Where did it happen?		
6. What did you do about it?		
Date:	Time:	
1. What has happened to you?		
2. When did it happen to you?		
3. Who was involved?		
4. Who saw what was happening?		
5. Where did it happen?		
6. What did you do about it?		
Date:	Time:	
1. What has happened to you?		
2. When did it happen to you?		
3. Who was involved?		
4. Who saw what was happening?		
5. Where did it happen?		
6. What did you do about it?		
Date:	Time:	
1. What has happened to you?		
2. When did it happen to you?		
3. Who was involved?		

4. Who saw what was happening?		
5. Where did it happen?		
6. What did you do about it?		
Date:	Time:	
1. What has happened to you?		
2. When did it happen to you?		
3. Who was involved?		
4. Who saw what was happening?		
5. Where did it happen?		
6. What did you do about it?		

Appendix 2

Anti – Bullying – Response Plan

Name:

Person Completing plan:

Description of bullying	Control measure agreed	Person/s responsible	Additional support / resources needed	Review date
