

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

2026-2027

School	Kirkham & Wesham Primary School
Effective from	Autumn 2026
Review date	Autumn 2027, or earlier if guidance changes
Policy lead	Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead / PSHE & Personal Development Lead

1. Purpose and status of this policy

Kirkham & Wesham Primary School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which every child can belong, believe and be the best they can be. Bullying is not tolerated. This policy explains how we prevent, identify, report, record and respond to bullying, including bullying that is prejudice-related, discriminatory or online.

A separate anti-bullying policy is not a statutory requirement in its own right; however, state schools must have measures within their behaviour policy to prevent all forms of bullying. This policy therefore works alongside the school's Behaviour Policy and safeguarding procedures.

2. Legal and statutory framework

This policy has been reviewed for September 2026 with regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (statutory guidance, in force from 1 September 2026).
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, including the duty to have a behaviour policy with measures to prevent bullying.
- Equality Act 2010, including duties relating to discrimination, harassment, victimisation and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Behaviour in Schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE).
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE) and the DfE's updated 2026 bullying resources.
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance, in force from 1 September 2026.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 safeguarding duties.
- DfE filtering and monitoring standards and the school's Online Safety / Acceptable Use arrangements.

3. Our school approach

Our approach is rooted in strong relationships, consistent expectations, early intervention and a culture in which children know it is safe to speak up. Our behaviour expectations are: Ready, Respect and Safe. Adults model calm, inclusive and non-derogatory language and challenge unkind, prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.

We do not label children as 'bullies'. We describe the behaviour and work with all children involved: the child who has experienced bullying, the child or children displaying bullying behaviour, and any witnesses or bystanders.

4. What is bullying?

The Department for Education describes bullying as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. The Anti-Bullying Alliance also highlights an imbalance of power. Whilst bullying often involves repeated behaviour over time, the school recognises that some serious one off incidents may cause significant harm, intimidation or distress and will be treated with equal seriousness.

At KWPS, we use four helpful features when considering whether behaviour is bullying:

- repeated or has the potential to be repeated
- intentional or knowingly harmful
- causes physical or emotional harm, fear, humiliation, exclusion or distress

- involves an imbalance of power - for example age, social status, numbers, confidence, physical strength, popularity, information or online reach

Not every disagreement, friendship difficulty, one-off unkind act or conflict is bullying. These matters will still be taken seriously and addressed through the Behaviour Policy. A single serious incident may also be a safeguarding concern even where it does not meet the definition of bullying.

5. Forms bullying may take

- Physical - hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or damaging belongings, unwanted physical contact.
- Verbal - name-calling, threats, mocking, insulting comments, repeated teasing or intimidation.
- Relational/social - deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships, coercion or humiliation.
- Online/cyberbullying - abusive or threatening messages, group-chat exclusion, impersonation, sharing images or information, gaming-related bullying, or using social media and digital platforms to harm another person.
- Technology-facilitated bullying - using AI-generated or manipulated images, audio or video, fake accounts, edited content or other digital tools to embarrass, threaten, impersonate or target another person.
- Prejudice-related or discriminatory bullying - behaviour connected to a protected characteristic, a perceived characteristic, association with another person, or another aspect of identity or circumstance.

6. Prejudice-related and discriminatory bullying

Bullying can be motivated by prejudice or hostility. Staff will be particularly alert to bullying relating to race, nationality or ethnicity; religion or belief; disability; sex; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; pregnancy or maternity, as applicable; and to bullying linked to SEND, appearance, health needs, family circumstances, being adopted or in care, being a young carer, socioeconomic circumstances or other perceived differences.

Discriminatory language and harassment are challenged whether or not the person targeted is present. Incidents are recorded accurately so that patterns can be identified and action taken. Where behaviour may amount to unlawful discrimination, harassment, a hate incident or a hate crime, the school will take appropriate safeguarding and external-agency advice.

The school recognises that discriminatory bullying may occur because a person is associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, or because others perceive them to have a protected characteristic.

7. Bullying and safeguarding / child-on-child abuse

Bullying can be a safeguarding issue. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 requires staff to recognise that children can abuse other children inside or outside school and online. Any concern that suggests a child may be at risk of harm, exploitation or abuse must be reported to the DSL or a deputy without delay.

This includes concerns involving serious violence, sexual harassment or sexual violence, coercion, harmful sexual behaviour, image-based abuse, threats, exploitation, extortion, hate-related abuse or persistent online harm. Safeguarding procedures take priority where the threshold for a safeguarding response is met.

8. Online and off-site bullying

The school's response is not limited to incidents occurring on the school site. Where behaviour outside school - including online behaviour, journeys to and from school, school trips or activity in the community - affects the wellbeing of pupils, the orderly running of the school or the school community, the school may respond in line with its Behaviour Policy and safeguarding duties.

Staff will preserve relevant evidence where appropriate, such as screenshots or messages, without asking children to repeatedly view harmful content. Concerns about illegal content, threats or immediate danger will be escalated to the DSL and, where necessary, the police or other agencies.

9. Prevention through curriculum and culture

Anti-bullying education is part of our wider approach to personal development. Through Relationships Education, PSHE, computing/online safety, assemblies, class discussion, stories, pupil leadership and wider curriculum opportunities, pupils learn:

- what healthy, respectful friendships and relationships look like
- the difference between conflict, unkind behaviour, banter and bullying
- how to recognise prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination and unsafe behaviour
- how to behave safely and respectfully online and how digital actions can have lasting impact
- how to report concerns for themselves or someone else
- how to be an active bystander and seek adult help rather than joining in or sharing harmful content
- that consent, privacy, personal boundaries and respectful communication matter
- that difference and diversity are valued

The school participates in Anti-Bullying Week and uses pupil voice to review how safe children feel. Work on bullying is reinforced throughout the year rather than being confined to one week.

10. Reporting concerns

KWPS is a telling school. Children are encouraged to tell any trusted adult if they are worried about themselves or someone else. They may also use agreed class or pastoral routes for sharing worries. A child will not be told to ignore bullying or simply 'sort it out' alone.

Parents and carers should report concerns to the class teacher in the first instance, unless the concern is serious or safeguarding-related, in which case they may contact a senior leader or the DSL. Reports will be listened to, recorded and followed up.

11. Staff response: what happens when bullying is reported

Staff will respond proportionately and in a child-centred way. They will:

- ensure immediate safety and provide reassurance
- listen separately to those involved and avoid assumptions
- record the concern and relevant factual information on CPOMS, using appropriate categories and linking relevant staff
- consider whether the matter is bullying, a behaviour incident, a safeguarding concern, discrimination/harassment, or a combination of these
- inform the DSL promptly where there is any safeguarding element
- gather information from witnesses and available evidence where appropriate
- contact parents/carers when appropriate, taking account of safeguarding considerations
- agree proportionate action, support and consequences in line with the Behaviour Policy
- set a clear plan for follow-up and check that the behaviour has stopped
- review for patterns, recurrence, vulnerable groups, locations, times or online platforms

Staff must never promise confidentiality. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis in line with safeguarding and data-protection requirements.

12. Supporting children

Children who have experienced bullying

Support will be tailored to the child's needs and may include a trusted-adult check-in, pastoral or learning mentor support, safety planning, support with friendships, reasonable adjustments, online-safety support, work with parents/carers and, where necessary, referral to external services.

Children displaying bullying behaviour

The school will hold children accountable for harmful behaviour while also seeking to understand what may be driving it. Support may include restorative work where safe and appropriate, explicit teaching of expected behaviour, emotional-regulation support, pastoral intervention, SEND consideration and work with parents/carers. Restorative meetings will not be used where they could place a child under pressure or create further harm.

Bystanders and witnesses

Children who witness bullying will be encouraged to report it, not reinforce it, and to seek help safely. They may also need support if what they have seen or heard has affected them.

13. SEND, vulnerability and reasonable adjustments

Children with SEND and some other vulnerable children can be disproportionately affected by bullying and may find it harder to recognise, explain or report what has happened. Staff will make reasonable adjustments to communication, investigation and support, and will consider whether behaviour linked to a child's SEND requires additional or different provision.

14. Recording, monitoring and governance

Bullying, discriminatory and prejudicial incidents are recorded on CPOMS. Senior leaders review records to identify patterns and to check whether actions have been effective. Monitoring may include type of incident, protected-characteristic links, repeated children, location, time, online/offline context and outcomes.

The governing body receives appropriate information about behaviour, bullying and safeguarding trends while maintaining confidentiality. Governors should assure themselves that the school's arrangements are effective and that statutory duties are being met.

15. Working with parents and carers

The school aims to work constructively with parents and carers of all children involved. We will explain what can appropriately be shared, the actions being taken for their own child and how the situation will be reviewed. Confidential information about another child will not normally be disclosed.

16. When external agencies may be involved

The school may seek advice or make referrals to children's social care, the police, health services, the local authority or other appropriate agencies where the circumstances require it. Some forms of bullying may also constitute a criminal offence, including assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, malicious communications or hate crime. Where someone is in immediate danger, emergency services will be contacted.

17. Complaints

Parents or carers who remain concerned about the way a bullying matter has been handled should use the school's published Complaints Policy. Safeguarding concerns about practice should be raised through the school's safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures as appropriate.

18. Staff bullying and harassment

Bullying or harassment involving adults is managed under the school's staff conduct, grievance, dignity at work, complaints and safeguarding procedures rather than this pupil anti-bullying process. The school will have regard to the Department for Education's 2026 guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff. The school expects parents and carers to treat all staff with dignity and respect. Incidents involving abuse, intimidation or harassing behaviour towards staff will be managed under the schools complaints, parent conduct and staff well-being procedures.

19. Review and pupil voice

This policy will normally be reviewed annually and earlier if legislation, statutory guidance or school procedures change. Pupil voice, including the views of children who may be less visible or less confident in speaking up, will contribute to evaluation of the school's anti-bullying work.

20. Related school policies

- Behaviour / Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use arrangements
- Equality Policy / Equality Information and Objectives
- Relationships Education / RSHE Policy
- SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan
- Complaints Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy
- Parental Code of Conduct

Key national guidance

- Department for Education - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026).
- Department for Education - Preventing and Tackling Bullying; publication page updated July 2026.
- Department for Education - Behaviour in Schools: advice for headteachers and school staff.
- Department for Education - Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance (in force from 1 September 2026).
- Department for Education - Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges: Filtering and monitoring core standard (updated August 2026).
- Equality Act 2010.